Class 244.5 N258a Book
General Theological Seminary Library
CHELSEA SQUARE, NEW YORK

CHIVERS-BINDER AUG 26 '33

Agnes de Tracy;

A TALE OF THE TIMES

OF

S. Thomas of Canterbury.

BY THE

REV. J. M. NEALE, B.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;

AUTHOR OF "HERBERT TRESHAM."

Ye goen to Canterbury: God you spede;
The Blissful Martyr quitè you your mede!
Prol. Cant. Tales.

Cambridge:

THOMAS STEVENSON.

LONDON; J. G. F. AND J. RIVINGTON.

MDCCCXLIII.

244.5
N258a
54831

CRANMER-GRAHAM LIBRARY
NEW HOPE SEMINARY

TO THE REVEREND

WILLIAM HODGE MILL, D.D.

CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

AND CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE;

LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

AND PRINCIPAL OF BISHOP'S COLLEGE, CALCUTTA;

This Tale

IS AFFECTIONATELY AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

PREFACE.

One of the unhappy effects which were naturally, though not necessarily, produced by the Reformation of the English Church, is the gulf which seems to be fixed between those who are now her sons, and the Saints and Martyrs of her earlier times. Even those whose names still appear in our Calendar produce, except as a testimony of the wishes of those who constructed the Prayer-Book, little practical effect; and we look on the days sacred to the memories of S. Augustine, and S. Elphege, and S. Dunstan, and S. Edmund, without venerating the Founders, and the Martyrs, and Confessors of Her who has been made, by God's good Providence, our nursing mother.

If such be our apathy towards those whom she commemorates, there is little need for wonder that one, whose name has, from unhappy circumstances,

been struck out of her Records, should not only be considered as unworthy of remembrance, but, in this Erastian age, become the subject of hatred and scorn. The very name of S. Thomas of Canterbury has become associated, even from our childhood, with all that was intolerant, and superstitious, and bigoted: our infidel and schismatical historians fostered the impression; and those who ought to have removed it have, in too many cases, feared to incur the odium of defending one against whom popular opinion was so decidedly expressed. Indeed, the silence with which he is treated by most of our standard Divines is a curious subject of remark.

The Becket papers in the remains of Mr. Froude were a noble and successful attempt to vindicate for the Saint the honour due to a Martyr; and if the following pages are at all serviceable in conducing towards the same end, my task will have been well undertaken. I have endeavoured in them to relate things as they really were; not claiming for the Prelate the glory of a perfect character, nor hiding what may be justly considered the abuses of the age in which he lived. Neither have I thought it necessary to remark on these in the course of the tale; since I am not writing for Romanists, but for

Anglicans; and the latter will probably be quick-sighted enough on these points.

A curious and instructive comparison ought to be drawn between S. Thomas of Canterbury and Archbishop Laud. The former, in opposing Erastianism and a Monarch, courted perhaps too much the favour of the people; the latter, in opposing the frenzy of the rabble, leant perhaps too much on the favour of a King. But who would seek for the faults, when he may contemplate the glorious actions of these two blessed Martyrs?

It is sometimes said, that granting S. Thomas to have been all that we assert he was, it can only be dangerous to exhibit him so, since thereby we seem enticing people to Romanism. But, not to mention that truth need never fear truth, the case is not so. Whatever Romanists may assert as to their retaining the same principles which S. Thomas held, one thing is certain, that they can in no sense be called members of the same Church. That Church, for which he contended during all his Episcopate and at last shed his blood, either exists in us, or not at all. And so it may be said of all our early Martyrs and Confessors. We are joined with them, on all essential points, in doctrine; to succession from

them, we alone have any claim. The more affectionate reverence we bear them, the more unwilling surely shall we be to leave their Church.

In the mean time we shall best follow their example by striving and praying for that Unity of the Church which they enjoyed. And while we think, in reference to our present dissensions, of Archbishop Laud's words, uttered as on this day, "Now it is in a storm itself, and GOD only knows whether or how it shall get out; and which is worse than a storm from without, it is become like an oak cleft to shivers with wedges made out of its own body;" we shall also remember how dear in the sight of the LORD is the death of His Saints; and how powerful is the protection of the blood of Martyrs. Surely, if lately the Church in Man was preserved by the remembrance of one Prelate, the Church in England, with her thousand Confessors, will not be permitted finally to fall.

PENZANCE, 1843.

BOOK I.

S. Thomas a Confessor.

Beati Patris merita jam in tuto posita securi magnificemus; qui gubernaculum fidei viriliter tenens, anchora spei tranquilla jam in statione composuit: qui contra omnes adversarios scutum timoris Dei tamdiu infatigabiliter tenuit, donec ad victoriam perveniret. quid enim fuit totus vita illius cursus nisi unus cum vigili hoste conflictus?—S. Maximus, *Hom.* lix. *de S. Eusebio.*

AGNES DE TRACY.

CHAPTER I.

It was the Feast of S. Margaret, 1164; and never did a July morning break more brightly over the ancient city of Canterbury. The heavy, yet majestic towers of S. Martin's—the first Christian church in England—and the massy Cathedral, glowed in the slant ray of the rising sun; the grey and quaint old houses, with tall sharp roofs, round-headed slits for windows, and here and there richly carved Norman doors,—the bridge, the castle, the gloomy wall, with embrasure and barbican, caught in their turn the earliest light: but stately above all rose the glorious Abbey of S. Augustine. The huge circuit of its enclosure walls was distinctly visible through the clear and transparent air: the curiously sculptured gate, its refectory, its cross church, its burial ground and tall cross, were

all bathed in the same purple hue. There it stood; in the world, but not of the world; enshrining in its holy earth the ashes of the earliest Archbishops; of its sainted founder, Augustine, Apostle of England; of wise Mellitus and Adeodatus; as well as of the first Christian king and his renowned successors.

The second Nocturn was over in the Abbey-church: the glorious triumph of the Virgin Martyr had been celebrated: and just as the sun-rays fell on the east end of the Choir, Te Deum burst forth from the assembled fraternity. The grey night-mist melted away from the vaulted roof and the slim shafts of the cloister gallery; the stained glass put on its crimson and golden glory; the saintly forms wrought therein came out into bolder relief: knights seemed to grasp their swords more knightfully; Bishops to wield their pastoral staff more bishopfully: and flakes of pure gold and crimson fell on the frescoed arches and flowery capitals of the Choir Piers. As the radiance of the chandeliers or *crowns of light* became dimmer, and the sweet influences of morning were felt in the gloomy pile, many a humble soul rejoiced to think that the Sun of Righteousness had arisen with healing in His wings; and joined truly and earnestly in the Divine Hymn of S. Ambrose,—Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ: Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. Louder and louder did the music swell, more and more triumphant waxed the notes

of the choir, as they chanted with one voice and soul, Day by day we magnify Thee: and we worship Thy Name, ever world without end. The bells in S. Ethelbert's tower gave forth a merry peal, as Te Deum concluded, and Lauds, the Matin sacrifice of praise, began. While the brotherhood are calling on all things, living and inanimate, spiritual and corporeal, to laud their Maker,—let us give a glance at those who fill the Choir.

In his throne on its south side, a meek old man, in richly worked velvet cope, scarlet, as signifying the Martyr's resisting unto blood, but spangled with pure gold, to symbolize her crown, and inwrought with fleurs-de-lys of pearls, fit emblems of her virgin purity, sat Odo, Lord Abbat of the Monastery of SS. Peter and Paul the Apostles, and S. Augustine, the first Archbishop. His pastoral staff was fixed by the side of the throne, the crook being turned inwards, to shew that his jurisdiction was not like that of a Bishop, over those without, but only reached to those of his own. A few grey locks escaped on either side of his golden mitre, with its rich inlay of jewels: and there sat on his features a composure and serenity well beseeming his high station; mixed, it may be, with a shade of timidity, such as befitted rather the Abbat than the Bishop. Before him lay a mighty volume, of gemmed exterior and illuminated vellum pages, scored in the simple musical notation of the times. On the south side, at the entrance of the Choir, sat Eadbald, the

Saxon Prior; a man of some forty years of age, with the blue eye and fair complexion that strongly spoke of his race: and if the general cast of his countenance wore the melancholy natural to that then oppressed nation, his eye seemed occasionally to brighten at the recollection that the first Saxon Archbishop since the Conquest then ruled the Church of England. Opposite to him, and on the other side of the Choir door, was Warel the Subprior: and in their richly carved stalls, whose balls and wreaths of flowers shewed the rapid introduction of the new style of church architecture, sat the sixty monks of the Foundation. The Altar, with golden candlesticks, monstrance, and reliquary; the stone roodscreen, with its seven lamps; the great brazen eagle, in the centre of the Choir; the lingering scent of sweet incense; the rich robes, the gorgeous hangings, the frescoed roof, the glowing tiles, the sublime Altar ascent, the solemn Gregorian chant; let the mind conceive all these at once, and it will have some faint idea of the scene as it then was.

Lauds are over: Abbat Odo has given the blessing, and, preceded by the silver cross and pastoral staff, passes from the Choir, and followed by the brotherhood, walks solemnly down the long Nave to its western door. Anxiously waiting for his exit stood brother Edred the porter.

"My lord," he said, "here is one of Sir Ranulph de Broc's villeins newly arrived, who beareth tidings

that his lord is very grievous sick, and despaired of by the leech. And he beseecheth you for God's love, and the amity that hath been so long between you, that you lose no time, but visit him at Saltwood, where he lieth ill; for he hath that to say which concerneth not only his bodily and ghostly health, but toucheth also on the welfare of this house."

"God shield," said the Abbat, "that a sick man should call for aid, and a churchman refuse to render it. Let the brethren know that we shall not partake of our morning meal with them: and let brother Roland say morrow mass in S. Alphege's chapel for the health of the good knight Ranulph de Broc. Cause them to make ready my palfrey; and pray brother Warel to ride with us this morning to Saltwood: and let the Infirmarer also come, bringing with him such drugs as from the villein's tale he thinketh likely to be of avail. Strange virtues have our country plants, when blessed by the prayers of Holy Church; and the leech is oftentimes of avail when, as the Psalmist saith, *Omnem escam abominata est anima eorum, et ad portas mortis appropinquaverunt.*"

"I will do your bidding, my lord," replied the porter: and the Abbat retired to doff his priestly robes, and to prepare for his journey.

In somewhat less than an hour, mounted on his ambling palfrey, the Sub-prior riding by his side, and the Infirmarer at a short distance behind, Abbat

Odo rode out of the great gate: and bestowing a *Dominus vobiscum* on one or two serfs wending to their daily toil, struck southward, as the road led him, through the garden of England. There, where the beautiful hop now hangs in clusters of gold, all was corn or pasture land; for hops were not used in England till more than three centuries after. Winding through pleasant vallies, and ascending sunny hills, the holy men travelled on; as free a conversation passing between them, as might consist with the comparative youth and modesty of the one, and the dignity and age of the other.

"Strange, strange times be they we live in, brother Warel," said the Abbat, "strange and evil seasons, full of hurt for the Church, and of danger and terror for ourselves. What a fearful schism is this which distracteth the holy Roman Church! We can scarce think it to be one, so divided against itself is it now. For what saith holy writ?—*Omnis domus, quæ in se divisa est, cadit:* every house divided against itself, is brought to nought. The emperor followeth Victor: the French king and our own monarch cleave unto Alexander: the one excommunicateth the other: bans, bulls, and interdicts are employed; yea, and when spiritual arms fail, they turn unto carnal weapons of warfare, forgetting that CHRIST hath said, *Regnum Meum non est hujus mundi*—my kingdom is not of this world. Then again the feud between the Archbishop and the King promiseth no good; GOD order it for the best."

"Yet of a surety, holy Father," replied the Subprior, "much good may thence arise to the Church. All the powers of this world, the pomp and majesty of kings, the corruption of courts, the bribery of wealth, the influence of power, have set themselves in array against the spotless Bride of CHRIST: and lo! she derideth them all; she fainteth not under the oppressor; she is not allured by the seducer; no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth up in judgment against her shall she condemn."

"Ah, my son," returned Odo, "thou art young, and seest these things with a young man's eyes: thou lookest forward to the crown, but overlookest the cross; thou regardest the triumph, but forgettest the conflict. I, perchance, from my long experience, lack some of that hurtful eagerness which besetteth untried dispositions; and lacking that, it may be I also lack some of that courage which well beseemeth all ages. I cannot, indeed, fear that the principalities and powers of this world can prevail against us: for what saith Holy Writ? *Portæ inferni non prævalebunt in eam:* but I dread lest the Church should suffer diminution of her glory, or infraction of her privileges; and I dread lest he, whom, like another Moses, GOD hath raised up to be her deliverer from secular bondage, our good Archbishop, should, by any step of human frailty, or any too subtle machination of the Enemy, be led to that excess of zeal which he may after repent with bitter tears."

"Now our Lady forefend!" exclaimed the other, "hath he not borne himself right bishopfully hitherto? hath he not put to shame his accusers by his own innocence, and terrified his enemies with the arms of holy Church?"

"All this he hath done, my son, and more," answered the Abbat; "he is of all ecclesiastical virtue a very pattern: given to hospitality; tender to CHRIST'S poor; to the hungry a Martha, to his Master a Mary; he spendeth his nights in prayer, and his days in holy deeds; and such an one as I am not worthy to loose his sandals from his feet. But he is of a fiery temper, which, if men say true, he inheriteth from his eastern ancestry: and who knoweth whither much spurring and goading may force him? Even like a noble destrier, which smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting; but being over-urged with the rowel, turneth against his own rider, and his own friends."

"Thou didst know the Archbishop, holy Father, before he was called to his high eminence. Wrought it so great a change in him as men say?"

"Both at Oxford and Bononia, my son, did I know him; and there were ever in him traces of the same noble disposition. Much, indeed, seemed he to have lost of his ancient rigour, when he was Archdeacon of Canterbury and Provost of Beverley; and marvellously did he adapt himself to all the changes and fickleness of our good King's court. And when

he was made Chancellor, he seemed for a season to put off the austerity and manners of a clerk, that he might win to himself the love of the King: and how he did accomplish his design, all England hath heard. And I verily think—GOD forgive me if I therein err—that he sometimes was in danger of being himself sucked up into that whirlpool of vain delights, even then when he sought to withdraw the King therefrom. But now, being by GOD's special grace consecrated Metropolitan of All England, he putteth away all secular things, he girdeth himself with sackcloth, he mortifieth the flesh, he feedeth the hungry with his own bread, he ransometh captives from the Sarazins with his own jewels, in all things approving himself a worthy successor of Augustine of blessed memory. *Sancte Augustine, ora pro nobis!*" he concluded, crossing himself.

"I have heard," observed Warel, "that it was ill-taken of the King that he should resign his office of Lord High Chancellor, without first acquainting him therewith. But how can one man serve two masters? how could he, being encumbered with worldly cares and dignities, have fed his sheep as his famous predecessor, Archbishop Theobald — whose soul GOD assoilzie!—did, when free from the like carnal occupations? And touching his not acquainting the King therewith first, he therein—saving your Fatherliness's judgment—did shew his rare prudence; for otherwise he had hardly, and with much greater offence, laid down that his dig-

nity at all. Of a surety, it was ill done of his master to deprive him in anger of that poor archdeaconry which he so greatly valued, that he besought almost with tears that he might retain it."

"I doubt not," pursued the other, "that our Lord Pope Alexander, in the council holden at Tours, three years agone, did, greatly stir him up to become the champion of the Church. Since then, he hath spared neither time nor labour; the wicked he hath made his enemies, and the good his friends; and forasmuch as the wicked be many, but the good few, many enemies hath he, and few friends."

"And right gloriously," said the Sub-prior, "did he stand forth in the council of Westminster for the rights of the clergy. True it is—woe is me therefore!—that grievous crimes have late been committed by clerks, and that they have been too lightly visited: but nevertheless CHRIST'S ambassadors are not to be in an earthly court judicable. And a fearful infraction of the rights of the Church that seemeth to me which the King designed to perform when he demanded of our Archbishop and of others the Bishops, that a clerk degraded for crime should be delivered to the King's officers, that he might be punished for the same according unto the laws of the land. And GOD be praised that England had then such a Primate, for ready enough were the other Bishops to agrace the King touching that matter."

"We were ourselves in Westminster," said Abbat

Odo, "at that season, having occasion to confer with our Right Reverend Brother of S. Peter's, touching certain points of discipline. And fearful it was to see the choler of the proud Earls and Knights there assembled, when the Bishops made answer, saying that they could not agree to the demand made of them."

"Yet they say, holy Father, that since that time he hath somewhat yielded to the prayers of the court, insomuch that at Oxford he did promise obedience to the laws without adjoining thereto his former *Salvo ordine.* Now if this be so, whereto serveth all his former boldness? What profit hath his constancy? Where may the Church betake herself, when of her stoutest defenders she is deserted, and by her boldest champions she is betrayed?"

"Men's reports, my son, vary respecting the promise which the Archbishop hath given. What it was, the time must shew, and that before many months be past. For, as I hear, the King hath summoned a great council to meet at Clarendon, on the Feast of S. Hilary next ensuing, to treat of Church matters and the state of clerks. The Archbishop will of course be there, and by his pattern will the Clergy frame themselves. But think not, if he should desert his charge, that GOD could raise up none other champions, even as Mardochæus said unto Esther, *Si etiam nunc silueris, per aliam occasionem liberabuntur Judæi*—if thou shouldest altogether

hold thy peace, then shall deliverance arise elsehow unto the people."

"Nevertheless," replied Warel, "I cannot but confidently hope that he, and none other, will save the Church in this extremity. When I have seen him as he did celebrate the holy Mysteries at the High Altar of his cathedral, his face was as that of one of those Knights who sleep in the Choir of our Abbey-church, of whose souls JESU have mercy: even so holy and composed and stern in its sadness, as one that living in this world, had while on earth his conversation in heaven. Yet of marvellous affable demeanour is he to the poor, and of them much loved; and if he knoweth how to rebuke with severity, he knoweth also how to bind up with gentleness; in all things approving himself a meet shepherd for CHRIST'S Flock; terrifying the lions with the sword, and directing the lambs with the crook."

"GOD," answered the Abbat, "order all for the best. Now we are drawing nigh to the fair castle of Saltwood; and note ye, my son, how little can worldly wealth profit in the hour of tribulation. Many a fair hide of land hath Sir Ranulph de Broc, and many a fair herd of beeves thereon; and now all these things shall remove themselves, as saith Holy Writ, like a post that maketh no delay. But what he hath laid up in heaven,—and not little is that, my son—by alms-deeds and good works, by ransoming captives from accursed Paynim, by

gifts to holy Church, and by fighting for the holy Sepulchre, these things abide by him and profit him now; and are as a sure treasure, which neither moth corrupteth, nor thief consumeth."

As he spoke, the party were ascending the hill on which the castle stands; and passing through the grey old barbican and the great gate, in which the toothed portcullis showed its formidable jaws above, were met by the porter, who, with a low obeisance, assisted the Abbat from his palfrey, and marshalled the visitors across the court.

CHAPTER II.

Conducted by the seneschal up the long flight of steps leading into the entrance-hall, and guided through several narrow vaulted passages, the Ecclesiastics met, at the door of the chamber the knight occupied, the Priest who held the family chantry, and was then in attendance on his patron.

"Right glad," he said, with a low obeisance, "will the knight be to see you here, lord Abbat: he hath been much troubled by evil spirits; but by our Lady's grace the fit hath passed off, and he hath his sound senses. He hath confessed and received his Viaticum; for I fear me he hath not much longer to stay: and since that he hath ever and anon asked if your Fatherliness were arrived, to whom he hath matters of great moment to disclose."

"Lead on, my son," returned the Abbat. And passing through the low door, with its wreath of

chevrons, they entered the room where the Knight lay. It was floored, walled, and vaulted with stone: rushes were strewed over the pavement, and in a chimney place or cavern, the arch whereof was richly decked with Norman mouldings, and rested on slender shafts with cushion capitals, were a pair of fire-dogs, which, though the weather was sultry, bore recent traces of having been used. On a low couch, at the further end, lay the good Knight: some of his servants were standing round him; and a shaggy deer-hound, with its long hairy face pitifully upturned towards its master, crouched by the bed-side. The Knight's face was very pale, except for one purple spot on each cheek, which flushed out over the whole as the Abbat drew near.

"GOD reward you, my lord," said the dying Knight, "for obeying my summons so speedily. I looked not for you till midday, and it lacketh, as they tell me, three long hours of that. I thought not to have lasted out till then."

"*Benedicite*, my son," replied the Abbat. "To GOD the LORD belong the issues from death: and we have brought with us an holy man, well skilled in the leech's art, if perchance he may benefit you."

"He shall be welcome to try, holy Father," replied the other, "so he delay me not long; and I thank you heartily for the kindness: but as for me, my earthly course is well nigh run. However, Sir Monk, I thank thee for being willing to exercise thy craft on me; and free leave hast thou."

The Infirmarer came forward; put a few questions to the sufferer himself and his attendants, as to the symptoms of the first attack, and subsequent exacerbations, of the fever; felt the pulse offered to him; and then desired one of the menials to fetch a cup of Malvoisie.

"But," said the chantry Priest, "the chirurgeon hath straightly forbidden that he should taste wine, lest it hurt him."

"It will not hurt him, Father, *now*," said the Infirmarer sadly. "Sir Knight," he continued, "if thou hast that which weigheth on thy mind in temporal matters, thou wilt do well to unburden thyself of it with all convenient dispatch; for, since I would speak plainly, I do not think that thou wilt live to see midday."

"GOD's will be done," replied the Knight. "This I looked for." They brought him the wine, and he drank it. "Now," he added, "my lord, I would have all men out save this holy man," pointing to the chantry Priest. When the others had retired, the Abbat said, "Sir Ranulph de Broc, since it seemeth to be GOD's good pleasure to take you to Himself, and that very shortly, meet is it that we lose no time in coming to the point wherefore you summoned us. You have already, as we hear, confessed, and received that absolution which holy Church bestoweth on her penitent children; and we doubt not that this holy man hath given you ghostly counsel befitting this extremity. Nevertheless it is

our duty to exhort you, that you forget not the poor and holy Church: the which we need the less to press upon you, in that we know you are forward of yourself to remember all these things."

"Ten hides have I left of pasture land," returned Sir Ranulph, "to the Abbey of S. Augustine, in token of my zeal for holy Church, and of my singular love for yourself. Lands also I have left sufficient to found a bead house for twelve men and a chaplain; also twelve marks for ever to found a chantry for the health of my soul in the church which my father, whose soul GOD pardon, did build in this place."

"Good works be they, my son, and acceptable to GOD: not as being sufficient in themselves to purchase salvation, for that were heresy of all good Christian men to be abhorred; but, forasmuch as they spring out of love to Him, and are done in obedience to Him, and minister to His Church, and support the poor, who are His, they be both good and profitable. Nevertheless thou must with all thine heart cleave unto CHRIST our LORD alone, trusting in Him, and worshipping Him evermore; that so, by His bitter Passion, and by the intercession of All Saints, thou mayest at last be admitted to His heavenly kingdom; as doubt not that thou shalt be, if thou departest in the true Catholic faith. And now let us know the matter which thou wouldest impart."

"It was chiefly," replied the Knight, "touching

the Lady Agnes de Tracy that I did ask for your presence. You shall incontinently see her; but now, as they tell me, she is worn out with her watchings, and sleepeth; and more tenderly could she not have watched and tended me, an she had been mine own daughter. Her father, Maurice de Tracy, who, as your Lordship knoweth, fell by my side in Holy Land, did, as he lay a-dying, after he had devoutly confessed his sins, leave this his daughter, whose mother died at her birth, to my care and guardianship; and since I did return into England, she hath abidden with me, and was of my wife, now with God, right well tended, and did love her as a mother, and made great moan for her. She, as thou also knowest, is contracted to my son Ranulph, and that with her own good consent; for broad lands though she hath, God shield I should oppress the orphan. Yet I thought it not convenient that my son should as yet enter into that state; for he is young, and I would desire him to win his spurs as gallantly as his father did. He is now in Normandy with our gracious King; and convenient it will not be that the Lady Agnes should tarry here, when I am departed, in the castle which will be his. I would therefore desire thee, of our old loves, and for the memory of him who died in the service of the Holy Cross, to see that she be well bestowed in some religious house at Canterbury: where she may well tarry some year or two yet, until my son shall have done good deeds of chevisaunce; and thou mayest be able to watch

over her, and to assist her with ghostly and temporal counsel."

"Rest assured, my son, that I will faithfully discharge the trust reposed in me. And so GOD be gracious unto me, as I am careful of the Lady Agnes's welfare.—Further, I will see thy son as soon as may be fitly done, after his return hither, and will tell him of this thy will. And now, Sir Knight, doth any other temporal matter press on thy mind?"

"Nothing," said Sir Ranulph de Broc. "Do thou, Father, call in my meynie, and bid them summon my foster-daughter. I would fain, had GOD so ordered it, have died knightfully in my stirrups, doing battle against the Sarazins,—but His will be done."

The Priest accordingly summoned the household; and first of all, Agnes de Tracy entered; and passing across the room, knelt by the dying man and burst into a flood of tears. "Agnes," said the Knight in a tremulous voice, for death was fast coming on, "I have given you over to the care of this holy Abbat, mine own and your father's ancient friend; and he knoweth all that concerneth your future life, and hath promised to guard you and to bestow you safely. Come, my child, you may not thus lament the will of GOD: rather thank Him that He hath raised you up so sure a friend."

Agnes rose, and turned to the Abbat. She was attired in the simplest dress of the time: the man-

tilla, fastened over the shoulders by two brooches, and the tasselled strings of silk falling in front, the tight sleeves, and unembroidered petticoat, that we see in the fair sepulchral effigies of grey old churches. Her Norman race might be read in her height, her dark clear eye, and raven hair; and as she turned to the Abbat she shewed a face exceedingly beautiful in its resigned sorrow.

"My Lord," she said, "I thank you in the name of my dear father—so I ever call him—for the kindness this day shown to me, soon, I fear me, to become a double orphan. Would to GOD that I had rather left him, than that he should be snatched from me!"

"Lady," said the Abbat, "we are glad that we may prove to this good Knight our friendship in his time of need. Learn to look on us as your father; for such, by GOD's help, will we be unto you."

"Are all here?" asked Sir Ranulph. "You have loved and served me faithfully all my life; and I think none here can say that I have been other than a good lord to him. You will find that none of you are forgotten—I have remembered all: you, my good Adam," addressing the seneschal, who knelt by the side of the Knight, and kissed his extended hand, "and all of you, to the meanest. I know that it grieves you sore to see your poor lord dying; but thanks to these holy men, I am well prepared; GOD grant each of you as easy a departing. And you will learn to love my son as you have loved me—of a gentle nature he is, and will well repay your love."

Stifled sobs and tears were the only answer to this speech. The dying man proceeded :—"Come nearer to me, Agnes. Methinks the room waxeth dark. It is very cold. I think I am going—I do commend myself, miserable sinner, to the HOLY TRINITY!"

The Abbat, seeing by the ashy hue which crept over the Knight's face, that the soul was departing, made a sign to those present to kneel, and in a clear voice began the Commendation of the spirit in the agony of death; "To GOD I commend thee, beloved brother, and to Him Whose creature thou art, I commit thee! that when thou shalt have paid the penalty of thy sins by thy mortality, to Him, Who formed thee from the dust of the earth, thou mayest return. When thy soul hath departed from the body, the glorious company of Angels meet thee! the mighty senate of Apostles come forth to thee! the triumphant army of Martyrs greet thee! the shining cohort of Confessors surround thee! the jubilant chorus of Virgins receive thee! the Face of CHRIST JESUS shine mercifully upon thee! Be thou free from the horror of the shades, and the terror of the flame, and the agony of the torment! Let Satan and his angels yield before thee, let them fly into darkness and eternal night! Let GOD arise, and let His enemies be scattered; let them also that hate Him flee before Him! Like as the smoke vanisheth, so let them vanish away: and like as wax melteth at the fire, so let the ungodly

perish before the presence of GOD! CHRIST JESUS, That was crucified for thee, save thee! CHRIST, That suffered His agony for thee, preserve thee now in this agony of death! CHRIST, That rose for thee on the third day, raise thee up to eternal life!"

There was a solemn silence, disturbed by nothing but the heavy gaspings of the dying Knight, and the sweet song of one little bird, that, unconscious of the scene of grief within, was pouring her lovely notes to the warm sunshine on the quaintly carved gurgoyle without. The Abbat, having paused for a moment, proceeded:

"Depart, Christian soul, from this world; in the name of GOD the FATHER, Who created thee; in the name of GOD the SON, Who suffered for thee; in the name of GOD the HOLY GHOST, Who hath sanctified thee; in the name of Angels and Archangels; in the name of Thrones and Dominations, in the name of Principalities and Powers; in the name of Cherubim and Seraphim; in the name of Patriarchs and Prophets, of Apostles and Evangelists, of Martyrs and Confessors: to-day be thy habitation in peace, and thy dwelling-place in the holy Sion. Through the same CHRIST our LORD. Amen."

Again he paused; and then continued, nearly in the words of the Reformed Anglican Church:

"O GOD of pity, GOD of mercy, GOD, That according to the multitude of Thy loving-kindnesses blottest out the sins of them that are penitent, and

puttest away the remembrance of former crimes by the grace of remission, look down favourably on this Thy servant; and give to him that asketh it with all his heart, forgiveness of his offences. Renew in him, most merciful FATHER, whatever hath been corrupted by the frailty of his body, or violated by the fraud of the devil; and join this member to the unity of the Church. Pity, LORD, his groanings; behold his tears; and him that hath no confidence except in Thy loving-kindness, receive by the grace of reconciliation: through CHRIST our LORD.

"Receive him, O LORD, and rescue him, as Enoch and Elias from death; Noe from the flood; Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans; Lot from Sodom; Daniel from the lions' den. Amen."

At the conclusion of this supplication, the good old Knight sighed deeply; and the Sub-prior held the pax to his lips. He had just strength to kiss the image of his Crucified SAVIOUR; and in the act, his spirit departed.

"CHRIST, continued the Abbat, "Who hath called thee to Himself, receive thee!" "And Angels," was the response, "into the bosom of Abraham bear thee!"—"Eternal rest grant unto him, O LORD!" "In Thy light let him see light!"—"To thee, O LORD," again the Abbat continued, "we commend the soul of Thy servant; that being dead to the world, it may live to Thee; that its sins may be blotted out by the remission of Thy pardon, and itself presented faultless in Thy sight."

The sorrowing company arose from their knees and retired. Agnes de Tracy gave one kiss to the cold lips, and tore herself away; and the lifeless body was left to the proper attendants.

In a south chapel of Saltwood church for many ages might be seen, in a low canopied recess, the effigy of a Knight in chain armour: the jupon was girt around him; his legs were crossed and rested on a hound; and his hands were clasped in prayer. And on the rim of the stone, in Lombardic characters, was the legend—

✠ Sire : Ranulph : de : Broc : gist : hici :
Dieu : de : salme : eyt : mercy : Amen.

CHAPTER III.

The Sub-prior Warel was right. Archbishop Becket *had* compromised himself by his promise to the King at Oxford. When the council met at Clarendon, he expressed his unfeigned sorrow for what he had done; and in swearing to obey the laws, insisted on adding his old clause, *Salvo Ordine.* Three days he persisted in this resolution; till, wearied out with the importunities of the nobles, won upon by the remembrance he entertained of the ancient friendship and familiarity he had enjoyed with his royal master, weighed down with the pusillanimity of the Bishops, and without a single friend or encourager at hand,—in evil hour he signed the Constitutions of Clarendon; thereby turning the Church into a creature of the state; making Christ's kingdom dependent on an earthly monarch; bringing her down from the lofty position she had enjoyed; and rendering it impossible, in

human likelihood, that she could ever regain it again. Regain it she did, and by the Archbishop's means:—but it cost him his life.

Archbishop Becket had no sooner taken the fatal oath, and seen the clamour of joy with which his compliance was received, and the engrossment of the sixteen Erastian Constitutions, whereby the jurisdiction of spiritual courts was limited, appeals to Rome forbidden, and excommunications restrained from being pronounced, without the consent of the King, than his heart smote him. In deep and bitter penitence he passed the following night; and he occupied himself with planning the means of extrication from his difficulties. That he would at all events, and at whatever cost, win back again the jewel of the Church's freedom, it cost his undaunted spirit little time to determine. But he felt that he had wilfully left the vantage-ground he held: the constitution might before-time seem to favour his claim; it was now decidedly opposed to him: plead canons and counsels as he might, he was liable to be met by a countercharge of perjury; and how could he exhort others to confidence, when himself had given the example of despair? The first thing to be done was, by severe acts of mortification and discipline, to give public proof of grief for the error of which he had been guilty: he abstained from offering Mass for forty days; and by confessing his crime in taking the oath, shewed also his determination not to be bound by it; since an

oath involving sin cannot be binding,—otherwise were Herod justified in the Martyrdom of S. John Baptist. But not satisfied with this, he despatched a secret messenger to the Pope, containing an account of the whole matter, and beseeching absolution for the oath; and he received a bull, not only absolving him from its necessity, but enjoining him to return to the duties of a Prelate. Now, however men may condemn the absolutions of this nature received from Rome, (and, alas! in many instances too justly,) none can deny that Becket was perfectly, by the very nature of things, released from the obligation of the Clarendon oath. Doubtless, the fact of his having taken it lowers the glory of his Martyrdom; but perhaps it enabled him to display a perseverance against difficulties, an indomitable resolution in well doing—a master mind, relying on GOD, and bending all its vast resources to fulfil His will,—such as the world can hardly furnish an instance to match.

Before we proceed to the commencement of the struggle, we must notice a few circumstances connected with the other characters of our tale.

Agnes de Tracy had scarcely been settled in the Benedictine nunnery of S. Mary at Canterbury, before she received a letter from Ranulph de Broc, filled with the warmest expressions of affection for herself, but setting forth, that in obedience to what he knew to be his deceased father's will, he had taken the Cross, and proposed to sail for the Holy Land; urging her, however, by all the respect she entertained for

his father's memory, by her love for himself, by the remembrance of the happy hours they had spent together, and by the binding character, in the sight both of God and man, of their contract, to remain stedfast to him. Agnes, though she might sorrow at, could not but admire, and love him for, his resolution; and together with a glove, which he should wear in his bassinet, returned him such an answer as made the heart of the young and gallant knight leap for joy.

It chanced that shortly afterwards Archbishop Becket visited Canterbury; and happening to be in need of a private secretary, the Sub-prior Warel was recommended to him by his friend Abbat Odo; and right gladly did the young monk enter on a sphere of action which brought him into daily contact with one whom he already half idolized. And the affection soon became mutual; for Becket, finding in his secretary a disposition congenial to his own, soon made him his confidential friend and adviser.

It will, however, be better to allow our characters to speak for themselves. It was on Tuesday the 23rd of October, 1164, that two persons were sitting together in the principal room of the convent of S. Giles, at Northampton. Before them was a massy oaken table covered with documents of various kinds; and in the chimney corner, supported by silver fire-dogs, carved with the monogram IHC, some logs were burning brightly. The elder of the two wore alb and stole; the younger was vested as a Benedictine monk. The face of the former was

one of those which haunt the beholder by day and by night, long after they have passed away. It expressed the firmest degree of resolve; the somewhat aquiline nose, chiselled mouth, and piercing grey eye could be interpreted in no other manner. Yet there was a contraction of the lofty forehead, which plainly shewed that strong and varying emotions were at work in the heart; yet, mixed with all the dignity of the countenance, there was kindness and affability, and with all its conflicting feelings, the tokens of a deep inward peace. The countenance of the other expressed an eager and anxious kind of hopefulness, not altogether free from disquietude and impatience.

"We are glad," said the Archbishop, (for he was the elder of the two,) "we are glad, son Warel, that thou art come at last; and thou hast done well that thou art so speedily here. Never, since first GOD called us to this weighty office which we imperfectly administer, have we been so pressed in spirit, so beset by fightings without, and fears within, so troubled with strong enemies, and ill assisted by weak friends, as these six last days, since our arrival in Northampton."

"And yet," observed Warel, "few have had more experience of those trials which the prince of the power of this world, and the malice of his servants, work on the true sons of holy Church, than hath your Fatherliness, since the day that the pall was first put about your shoulders."

"True, my son," replied the other, "God hath called me, unworthy though I be, to suffer much for His Church, as thou very well knowest. For first of all, when I would have left England, after the council held at Clarendon, the sea suffered us not, but did twice drive us back unto our native land, as obeying the commands of his Lord, Who would not have us to escape the danger, or shrink from the suffering. Then again, the King did summon us before himself, and we refused to appear, as well knowing the snares and dangers which evil men had plotted for us in his court. On this account, as thou also knowest, did he summon this parliament at Northampton, that we might therein be accused of high treason and perjury—crimes which our soul hath ever detested. God forbid that we should not prefer His glory and the Church's good before an earthly king's anger; yea, and that we should not rather break through a wicked oath, and that wrung from us by necessity, and for which we have obtained absolution, than add unto its sin—of which we truly and heartily repent us—by keeping it!"

"But what, holy Father," asked Warel, "hath chanced since your Paternity's arrival here? For on my road hither from Canterbury I heard nothing but such idle tales as Fame loveth to disport with."

"We will tell you, my son, as briefly as may be; for it may much concern you to know. Marvellous great concourse was there hither on S. Etheldreda's day, both of Earls and Barons, Bishops and Ab-

bats, and a rascal rout of retainers and followers. Never did I see Parliament more fully thronged; for all men knew that now must come the decision of the Church's cause; that it should now be seen whether the sword or the Crosier were to have the preeminence, whether the prayers of departed Saints or the threats of ungodly men should take most effect. Then the King, arrayed in his royal robes—God grant him long to wear them!—stood and made an oration against me. Thou knowest how we were once fast friends; how our thoughts and speech were in common; how our business and rest, our days and our nights, were shared together. Judge then, therefore, if we, who have never wronged him even in thought, who for him would give up every thing, save the testimony of a good conscience, who from him would endure any thing, save insult to the Church whereof we are, under God and His Vicar, the Head,—judge if we did not, like the prophet Jeremy, long for eyes like fountains of tears, that we might weep and be satisfied, that the old friend should become the young enemy, the ancient benefactor the new injurer! He accused us of contumacy, in that, when summoned, we denied to appear before him. We, as our duty was, defended ourselves therefrom; pleading with many tears,—for they be the arms of a Bishop,—that we were ready with joy to have come before our monarch, but for two weighty reasons, us then urging: on the one hand, that our diocese, troubled by factions, and ill

regulated, could then not without much difficulty spare us; and on the other, that from what we knew of the machinations of our bitter enemies—whom God forgive!—we doubted our persons would at that season be scarce safe in the court, and did therefore humbly desire to wait till a fitter opportunity of presenting ourselves there might arise. The King made answer with exceeding angry and bitter words, calling us ungrateful to his love, and traitors to his favour; and did exhort the whole assembly to find us guilty of the matter wherein he accused us."

"But surely," answered the Sub-prior, "there was too much love, not only for the Church, but for truth and honesty, in that great council, containing in itself the flower of English chivalry and learning, that hath vanquished ere now Paynim and Sarazins, both by lance and by book—yea, too much love, holy Father, for thyself — that they should do as the king bade them."

"Alas, my son!" returned Becket, "knowest thou not that which the wise man saith—*Ira regis leonis rugitus*—the king's wrath is as the roaring of the lion? Truly the love of honesty and uprightness profiteth those little who have the fear of man before their eyes. And love to ourselves had few in the council: the laymen hate us because we will not overlook their encroachments and robberies on holy Church; and the Bishops and Abbats, because with strong arm we curb in their excess of

riot. With one voice did they take counsel against us, finding us, in the matter nominated, guilty of contumacy towards the king; and so brake they off for that day. We, with a sad heart, betook ourselves to our lodgings in this house; and none, save our own vassals, followed us. Nay, in all this town, none are there of the better sort that bear true love to us but thyself, son Warel, and the Prior of this convent;—and little can he understand the mighty struggle which even now is going on for the very being of the Church. He scarce comprehendeth that we fear for her, and not for ourselves; and doth choose such consolations as pedagogues do for practice of rhetoric read unto their scholars. Seeing that on earth there was none who could give us guidance or comfort, we continued instant in prayer to God all that night; and did on the next day, being Friday, understand that our goods and chattels were, for that contumacy whereof we spoke afore, by the council declared to be forfeited unto the king. Then he, who thus robbed us of all, did, as of great grace and favour, content himself with but five hundred pounds; which sum, as being far beyond that which we could pay, the Bishops did band together and become sureties for. That done, incontinently he demanded of us another five hundred pounds, that, as he averred, he had lent to us when we were Chancellor. Such sum we had of him, but as a royal and free gift; yet, forasmuch as it was his pleasure now to deprive us of it, we did

willingly let it go: knowing that it becometh not God's servants to wrangle about worldly wealth. And we were glad, yea right joyful, that we might thus make known unto him, as before by word, so now by deed, that while we would die for the least penny of the Church's wealth, of our own we made little care. Notwithstanding we did incline to say, as said he of old, "For it was not an enemy which "hath done me this dishonour, for then I could have "borne it; neither was it mine adversary that did "magnify himself against me, for then peradventure "I could have hid myself from him: but it was "even thou, my companion, my guide, and my own "familiar friend!"

"But," said Warel, as the Archbishop paused, "something I heard of embezzlement and extortion laid to your Paternity's charge; may I crave if that were true,—or rather, as I hoped, a report as false as the accusation itself would have been?"

"Thither am I coming, my son. It was on the day after, when it pleased the king to lay to our charge two hundred and fifty thousand marks; these, as he constantly affirmed, we received in our Chancellorship for vacant benefices. Then was it that we might well perceive the small love which the Bishops bare us. Some were there, who ceased not to urge us, as though we had been guilty, that we should resign our See, and betake ourselves to the king's mercy; others thought it unmeet to surrender after this fashion the privileges of the

Church; and yet did so speak of us, and deal by us, as if we were unmeet to company with them. When they could not agree touching their advice, we thought it good to send messengers to the king, craving him to delay the matter till yesterday; which with much difficulty he yielded unto. Yet it pleased GOD, that when we should have made our appearance before him, we were seized with so sudden and grievous a sickness, that our life was by the leech for some season despaired of: and as you may partly behold, unto our usual strength we have not yet attained. But to-day we determined to give our answer, even though we should perforce be carried on a couch into the great hall: and to-day accordingly will we go thither; though, GOD be thanked, in far other guise. And this morning, before thou camest, many Bishops visited us in our chamber, beseeching us to resign our See, and submit ourselves wholly unto the king; that thereby we might ourselves be set free from our present danger, and the kingdom, now as it were torn into two, might return to peace. To whom we made answer, that sooner would we be burnt alive than thus endanger the salvation of our souls, by deserting the cause of GOD."

"And what, holy Father, is the course which thou dost now intend to follow? For, as I well perceive, on this day hangeth the fortune of the Church. For, if your Fatherliness, which our Lady forefend! should be condemned, what security hath

the Church that her Head may not, at any time, when he runneth counter to those that would assault her, be by base treachery removed?"

"Leave the event, my son, to GOD, and the means to us. It waxeth near the hour wherein we appointed to celebrate Mass in this church. Wherefore see that all fitting preparations thereto be made with convenient speed; that we may, as it were, prepare ourselves, should GOD so order it, to be a sacrifice in which He may delight, by offering up That great Sacrifice for Whose sake He is propitious unto us."

The Sub-prior left the apartment, and the Archbishop was left alone to meditate on the behaviour which would befit him in his approaching time of trial.

CHAPTER IV.

High Mass was said in the Priory church; and the Archbishop, bearing in his hand the blessed Sacrament, descended from the Altar. That day he had chosen, as knowing the grand contest to which he was to be called, to officiate in his most precious vestments. The rich jewelled sandals, the thick gold fringes of the silken tunic and dalmatic, the green velvet chasuble, wrought round the collar with rubies, and inwrought with many an ihc and ma of small pearls; the fringed ends of the stole appearing between the tunic and dalmatic; the maniple studded with gems, the pall fastened on to the chasuble with golden pins, and symbolising the archiepiscopal dignity of the wearer, — made at Rome of the finest wool, from lambs shorn on S. Agnes' day, and blessed by the Pope himself; the golden mitre, and rich gloves; these were the armour which he then put on.

The scene and the spectators were well worthy of the drama about to be acted before them. The King and the Nobles were assembled in the great hall at Northampton ; the Bishops in their glorious vestments, the Barons and Knights had taken their seats; esquires and retainers were in waiting ; and all eyes were turned to the door where the Archbishop was expected to make his entrance. Word was in the meanwhile brought of the manner in which he was advancing ; of the robes which he wore, as a Bishop who had just been celebrating the Holy Mysteries, and of the Host which he carried in his hand. Astonished and indignant that the Primate ventured thus to approach his tribunal, the King arose, and commanded the Bishops and Barons to accompany him into an inner room. Here a fearful scene of turbulence and clamour ensued: the King denouncing the Primate as a traitor; the Barons demanding his immediate punishment,—and that with such hideous outcries, that Roger, Archbishop of York, fearing that the Archbishop would have been murdered on the spot, hastily withdrew.

Becket meanwhile, attended by Warel and a few of his retainers, entered the great hall, which was almost deserted, and took his seat, patiently abiding the issue ; prepared for the worst result, and seeing from the downcast looks and secret whispers of his attendants that they expected it. Nothing terrified by the dark scowls of the retainers who were left in the hall, he kept up a conversation with those imme-

diately around him. Spite of the massy stone walls which divided the council-chambers, and the enormous portals of oak, clamped with iron and studded with nails, or rather sharpened bolts, the clamour from the interior when it swelled loudest was distinctly audible by the occupiers of the exterior room.

"Holy Father," said Warel at length, "surely thou hast now given sufficient proof of thy readiness to meet what accusation soever may be preferred against thee; and to defend, as a good champion, the Church over which thou hast been made overseer. Peradventure GOD giveth thee this breathing time, that thou mayest therein make thy escape from these blood-thirsty men, inasmuch as He hath further need of thy ministry hereafter."

"If it be His will, my son, that I should serve Him in time to come, He can deliver me now; if He hath no need of me, right willing am I to be offered up for His Name. But mark you, my son, how the wicked flee when no man pursueth; note well how an unarmed Christian Bishop putteth a host of armed knights, yea, and a king himself, to flight; so shalt thou learn how less than feeble is the strength and the wisdom and the confidence which pertain to this world and the prince of its power, when they be weighed against the unseen might which holy Church hath in herself, and bestoweth on her true sons."

As Becket spoke, the door opened, and the Bishop

of Exeter made his appearance alone. Coming straight to the Primate, he fell on his knees before him, and in a voice broken with tears said—

"I beseech thee, most holy Father, by all the love that thou bearest to those who have been born again unto salvation in the same waters with thyself, who have been accounted worthy to offer the same Venerable Sacrifice, who are CHRIST'S vicars in the same Church, that thou wilt have pity upon us, who on thy account suffer such miseries as those thou seest. The King is furious, the Barons threaten, the Bishops are timorous, the Church is in danger; and that because thou, her chief pastor, rather considerest that which is taught in the schools as strictly just, than that which is practised among men as honourable and expedient. As GOD shall hereafter judge me, I do from my soul believe that thou art innocent in this sum which our master layeth to thy charge. But as things now be, thy innocence will rather turn to thy detriment than thy profit: for they who judge thee will make thee guilty whether thou art or not. This is not the season, venerable Father, to say that the rights of holy Church extend over the great men of this world: neither canst thou appeal to our lord the Pope with expectation of profit thereby accruing; for how should he dare to offend so mighty a Prince, when he might thereby throw off his rule, and acknowledge, as the emperor doth, the Antipope, his rival? Yield then, Father, to the necessity of the times; resign thy Arch-

bishoprick into the King's hands; retire thyself into a religious house; and leave the disposal of the Church at this time to him who will take it, whether thou leavest it or no. So gentle language wilt thou hear from none of the Prelates as from myself: so firm a well-wisher to thee hast thou none; and that which I beseech with tears, they will demand with accusations and threats. Thou canst not benefit the Church, even shouldst thou die for her,—the which, except our Lady of special favour defend thee, thou runnest much danger to do; and thus wilt ruin thyself, and us, and all who pertain to thee. Even now our venerable Brother of York withdrew from the council because he would not see thy death: and of much love I came forth to thee; for the Lords be so furious against thee, that they will owe me small thanks for warning thee of thy danger."

Becket answered, "A piteous sight, truly, is it to behold a Christian Bishop kneeling, and with such a request in his mouth. Rise, brother: if thou wilt kneel, kneel to GOD, and beseech Him both to give me courage in this extremity, and to dispel thy own fear, which blindeth thine eyes, and perverteth thine heart. It is not with thee as with Gilbert of London, or Joceline of Salisbury; right glad would they be of our downfal, as hoping to rise thereby. But what hast thou said to us, that might not have been, and peradventure was, uttered to our prede-

cessor, S. Alphege, of blessed memory?* He gave up his body to be stoned rather than pay ransom to the Paynim that held him in bondage; and he therefore hath a shrine on the spot that was hallowed by his blood at Greenwich, and a day for the devotions of the Faithful for ever. And thou wouldst have us,—us who have been fortified with the holy chrism, and girded with the venerable pall, to betray ourselves and our Church, that yielding to Christian men, which from him accursed Danes could not extort? *O Sancte Elphege, in istâ horâ tribulationum nostrarum, ora pro nobis!*"

"Then must thou follow, holy Father," replied the Bishop of Exeter, "the bent of thine own—madness must I call it, or fortitude? Thou hast chosen thine own way: full of perils and darkness it is; but this I verily believe, that if any Prelate in Christendom can tread it with safety and with honour, thou art he. Admire thee I may—follow thee I dare not. Our Lady and All Saints prosper thee!" And he left the hall.

"There mayest thou see," said Becket to Warel, "a notable example of the way of this world. He

* S. Alphege, or Elphege, translated from Winchester to Canterbury in 1006, was taken prisoner by the Danes, and, refusing to ransom himself, stoned to death at Greenwich, where the parish church now stands, April 19, 1012, which day has ever since been observed by the English Church in honour of his Martyrdom. He is one of those whom Laud, in his speech on the scaffold, mentions as having "gone the same way, though not by the same means," with himself.

knoweth in his conscience that we do nothing but that which our duty bindeth us to do; yet dareth he not to face the danger thence arising, but preferreth to keep the favour of the King, though thereby he incur the indignation of the Supreme King of Kings."

"May I crave of your Fatherliness," said Warel, "whether the Bishops and temporal Barons know by any means of the Absolution which his Holiness hath sent from the Clarendon oath? Otherwise, methinks, they will be much emboldened to proceed to any extremity whereto they may, by the fury of the ungodly men unto whom they are leagued, be driven and impelled."

"They know it not, my son: for hardly had we been able to obtain that bull at all, had it not been kept secret, but permitted in the stead thereof to be bruited abroad. Nevertheless, this know, that had we, by the malice or violence of our enemies, or the secret machinations of those who be in foreign countries, been deprived of the consolation and fortitude we have derived of that message from the Apostolic See, we should nathless have proceeded on all points similarly; knowing this, that a wicked oath bindeth no man, whether he be absolved therefrom or not. And we do here confess that we were therein guilty of great and mortal sin, when yielding to the importunities of those who, as we since have discovered, bare little good will unto us; for God He knoweth, we yielded not out of any fear of our

enemies. Penance therefore we have heretofore done; and we do here profess that for that crime we are not worthy to be reckoned with our predecessors, unless it shall please God that we may by our sufferings wipe out the stain of that error."

The great door at the upper end of the room creaked heavily on its hinges, and disclosed the whole body of Bishops advancing together. All who were seated in the council-chamber, except the Archbishop, arose; and the Prelates advanced to the chair of their Metropolitan, but slowly and uncertainly, and as if they were conscious how dastardly was the submission which they were lending to the civil power. Gilbert Foliot, lately translated from Hereford to London (and the first English Bishop of whose canonical translation we have authentic evidence), headed them. He had a stoop in his figure, and a bloated and unwieldy appearance, which entirely deprived him of a Prelate's dignity; and a downward and cunning look in his eye, which conveyed the impression, and not unjustly, of a man crafty enough in carrying on his designs, and not overscrupulous in the means he used to accomplish them. He was the only Bishop who at that time bore personal ill-will to Becket; the others were persuaded by him, or overawed by the king, into the hostile position which they now assumed. On his right was Joceline de Bailleul, Bishop of Salisbury: a man who, though not of strict and austere life, was very charitable to the poor, and a benefactor to

his church at Old Sarum, "the ark of God shut up in the temple of Baal," as from its damp and unhealthy situation, surrounded by bleak and barren hills, it was sometimes called. Hilary, Bishop of Chichester, a well-meaning but vain Prelate; Hugh, Bishop of Winchester, William de Waterville, lord Abbat of Peterborough, and Giles, Bishop of Hereford, were those who, as having been most active in the discussion in which the Prelates had just been engaged as to the proper course to be pursued, took their position nearest to Bishop Foliot. The latter then spoke, but more in the tone of a schoolboy repeating a lesson which he only half remembers, than in that of a Bishop making an announcement involving the fate of his superior.

"Holy Father," he said, "since by the command of our mighty lord and sovereign, Henry, we have met together in this place, divers charges and accusations have been, in part by him, in part by others, brought forward against your Paternity. The which it was his pleasure that we, in common with the temporal Barons, whom it had pleased him to summon, should question of, and seek into. Which task we undertook with the more willingness, in that we nothing doubted by such inquisition to purge your Fatherliness from the evil deeds laid to your charge, by making clear and manifest your integrity and perfect innocence of the same. When, however, nothing that we hoped appeared, but rather the contrary was made manifest, we looked

that you should have quitted the station which you held, and by penitence and devotion sought to do away those sins which so flagrantly became notorious, to the peril of your soul, the great infamy of the Church, and the scandal of all good Christian men. Even as it is written, *Qui celat peccatum non prosperabitur: qui autem confitebitur derelinquens ea, misericordiam inveniet;*—Whoso concealeth his sin shall not prosper; but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy. Touching this matter, we have, as is well known unto all men, visited you once and again; beseeching you in season and out of season, even with many tears, to lay down your dignity, and return unto a humble life. With how unkind and threatening a countenance you have ever received us, and with how bitter reproaches you have taunted us, in that we rather cleave to our Sovereign than to the headstrong imaginations of ungodly and ambitious men, it needeth us not now to repeat. Wherefore, seeing that those our brotherly admonitions you have despised and contemned, duty willeth that we come unto you in another manner; with how great sorrow and bitterness of heart, God He knoweth, and all good men may partly guess. Therefore, by the consent of the Bishops and Abbats in this parliament assembled, I do hereby declare, that from this time forward, we do utterly renounce and repudiate all subjection unto you as Primate; that we shall appeal to our lord the Pope against you, as a perjured

man, and thereby canonically incapable, according to the decrees and customs of the Holy Catholick Church, to exercise any authority, power, pre-eminence, or rule, as Bishop; and finally, that we shall in his court proceed against you to the utmost, that we may procure of him your deprivation."

To this harangue Becket quietly answered, "I hear." A deep silence ensued: the Bishops looked one on another, as not knowing what was to come next. They had hoped some answer from the Primate, to which they could have made some plausible rejoinder; as it was, they were completely put to a nonplus. And their confusion was increased by the very evident tokens of suppressed mirth which prevailed amongst the rude feudal retainers, who crowded the hall, at the silence of Bishop Foliot after his long and laboured harangue.

A very seasonable relief to the Prelates was afforded by the arrival of a deputation from the King and the Barons.

"Sir Archbishop," said Robert Earl of Leicester, who headed it, "the King commandeth you by us, either to give us your accounts incontinently, or else from our mouth to hear your sentence."

"No, my son!" said the Primate, rising, "hear me first. Free was I given to the Church at first; discharged I was, at my election to the See of Canterbury, from all antecedent debts: therefore accounts will I never give. Furthermore, neither law nor reason permitteth that sons should judge

their fathers. Wherefore the jurisdiction of the King I decline, as not extending to this case; and I appeal to God, and to my Lord the Pope, at whose judgment-seat I stand. For you, my brethren the Bishops, thither I summon you also, to make answer for fearing man more than God. And I commit myself and the Church of Canterbury to the care of God, and of my Lord the Pope, under whose protection I depart hence."

So saying, and followed by Warel and his vassals, the Archbishop left the hall with the same state in which he had entered it. So utterly unexpected was his movement, that the Bishops and Barons stood in stupid astonishment, till the shout which burst from the crowd on the outside, by whom the Primate was already looked upon as a confessor for the Church, recalled them to themselves.

"God's malison on him!" said Sir William de Tracy: "we be the laughing-stock of the rabble rout! Why did we not arrest him on the spot?"

"Marry," said the Earl of Leicester, "he hath fairly given us the slip. Who would have deemed that the proud Prelate had so much courage in him?"

"I would the matter might end here," observed Bishop Foliot. "But now cometh all the toil and vexation of an appeal to the Pope; and we ever knew how his Holiness lent a favourable ear to this Becket."

"Dead men make no appeals," said Sir William

de Tracy: "had I known the cunning counsel that worked in his brain, he should not have 'scaped me so."

"Now, God forefend," returned the Earl of Leicester, "that we should do violence to a churchman, and he a Prelate! Verily guilty he is; and so far as we may by law and with a safe conscience, let us proceed against him: further than that comporteth neither with the honour of a knight, nor the good health of a Christian soul."

"It seemeth to me," said Abbat de Waterville, "that we ought to know the king's pleasure herein: wherefore, I propose that we return into the Council-chamber, there to lay the matter before his princely wisdom."

"Peradventure," said the Bishop of Exeter, "Becket hath but retired to send us his resignation with the less down-coming of his pride. I did but now speak to him before your lordships did come into the hall; and to me he seemed not altogether averse therefrom."

"No, my lord," replied the Bishop of London, "while he is alive he will never give it up; it must be wrested from him. Nevertheless, if it so please your lordships, let us return unto the king."

"A gallant knight would this Primate have made," said the Earl of Leicester. "Right bishopfully hath he borne himself throughout the whole parliament. Verily chain corslet covereth some-

times less hardy heart than beateth under his pall."

"Easy enough," answered William de Tracy, "is it to shew a bold face when a man is bucklered behind his back with so rascal a following. Go you as afore, my lords," he continued: "if his Lordship of Leicester will grant me a word or two, we will follow directly to the King."

The rest moved on, and Tracy proceeded: "My lord, while these lazy churchmen be on our side, we shall make no progress in this matter. Your lordship hath the King's ear; use it, I pray, to make him against this haughty Bishop, by not suffering his appeal to be carried to Rome."

"Something too warmly, in my poor judgment, Sir William de Tracy, do you pursue this quarry," returned the other. "Doubtless, the matter craveth more impartial counsel than these Bishops will give; but the King hath many other laymen with him besides ourselves, who all bear love to Becket little enough."

"Now, my lord, wot you the reason why Odo of Canterbury came not hither? It standeth me much to see him; for, as I hear, Sir Ranulph de Broc, to whom my sister was left in guardianship, is deceased, and hath commended her to the care of this Odo, till he to whom she is affianced, the son of the old knight, cometh home to claim her hand. But where he hath bestowed her I know not, and hoped to have heard from his own mouth in this place."

"Something, if I remember me," replied his friend, "was said touching a sudden illness wherewith he was seized. But most men deem that he rather held himself excused, because he would have nought to do with sitting in judgment on the Archbishop, whom he holdeth in great veneration."

"For my own part," said Tracy, "so soon as this matter is settled I shall journey to Canterbury, to set in order my own matters there. But now let us follow the rest, and see how the King receiveth the news of Becket's audacity."

CHAPTER V.

It was the tenth night after these events that Eadwith, the wife of Stigand, a serf on the estate of the See of Winchester, in a wild and unfrequented part of Surrey, was watching, in her wretched hovel, the feverish slumbers of her baby. It was a wild night in the beginning of November: the wind swept across the common, driving sheets of rain before it; sometimes rushing and roaring in the old oak wood on the hill above the house; sometimes growling and grappling like a wild beast in the roof itself; and sometimes shaking the ill-hung door, as if it would tear it from the hinges. Stigand was gone to seek the parish priest, fearing the baby would not overlive the night, and determined that it should not depart without the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. On the wood-fire a cake of dough was baking, and an ill-looking wiry-haired cur lay on the sheep's skin, which served as a rug. Suddenly

the dog started to its feet, and pricking up its ears began to bark violently.

"Down, Odin! quiet, cur!" said the poor mother. "Oh, my baby, that wretched beast has awaked you!"

While she vainly tried to hush the baby, the dog flew to the door, and scented eagerly at its sill; and at the same time a heavy hand was heard shaking the upper panel, and a voice, half-drowned by the wind, seemed to be demanding admittance.

"S. Edmund, S. Erkenwald, S. Ethelred, S. Alphege!" said the woman, stringing together her Saxon saints;" "S. Oswald, S. Wulfstan, S. Chad, S. Alkmund, S. Wilfred, preserve us!" And then in a voice that trembled with terror, she demanded who was there.

"Open the door for our Lady's love!" said the voice: "here be two poor monks have perished with the rain and cold! Open the door to the friendless, and the benison of S. Giles be upon you."

"If you be robbers," answered Eadwith, "I cannot keep you out; and if you be honest men, welcome! Lie down, Odin!" she continued, opening the door.

The fierce wind drove a raindrift in at the open door, as two men, drenched from head to foot, but vested as Benedictine monks, entered. It was shut to again, and fastened with the oak bar. The wanderers gladly hung over the fire, spreading out their

hands to catch its heat: Eadwith threw on fresh logs; and the bright red glare of the burning wood danced on the rude logwalls, shewing at one corner a rude bed of sheepskins, a mud floor, a pitched roof, from the windbeam of which hung a cross-bow and pruning-knife. A hole was broken through it, at which the smoke found a vent, except when it preferred eddying down into the house. A kind of shelf held a bundle of rushes for light, and a few quarrels for the cross-bow. Over the fire hung a side of bacon; from which the goodwife, being now certified of the character of her visitors, cut some savoury rashers, and set them on to broil, at the same time giving the cake another turn.

"Now our Lady be praised for this shelter!" said the elder of the travellers; "and poor though we be, we will try to repay it to you, my daughter. How call you this place?"

"The nighest village," replied Eadwith, "is called Horne: but a long league is it thither. My husband went there at nightfall, and is not yet returned."

"Are we in Kent or in Surrey, my daughter?" asked the other.

"In Surrey, father," answered the woman, "and nigher to Sussex than Kent, and yet not far from that neither. The sun at noonday stands right over Worth, which lieth in Sussex; at night he setteth behind Cowden, which is the first village in Kent. Hush, my baby!" she continued, as the child again

began to cry; and attempted to soothe it with the "Up-a-day!" which has descended to our nurseries from Saxon times.

"Aileth the child anything?" enquired the younger traveller.

"I fear me," answered the mother with tears, "that it is not long for this world,—and he is my only one. His father is even now gone for Edred the chaplain, that it may not depart unbaptized."

"God shield it should do so!" said the other. "But hark! there is a hand on the lintel!"

Eadwith, knowing her husband's sign, flew to the door; and Odin, hearing by the step that it was his master, flew thither too, in a paroxysm of joy: for though he had been made to keep the peace towards the strangers, he evidently did not like their proximity.

"It is of no use, wife," began Stigand, "the chaplain is off and away, and returneth not till the morrow. Now, S. Martin defend us! who are these?" he added, as he caught sight of the strangers.

"Holy monks," replied his wife, "that were benighted on our common, and that sought for shelter here."

"And that will supply the chaplain's lack to your baby, if you wish it, my son," added the elder, who was addressed by the other as Father Francis.

The father having accepted the offer with joy, the simple form of Private Baptism was gone

through by the monk; who then enquired with what disease the child was afflicted. "Then," he continued, addressing the other, "thou, brother Martin, hast some skill in leechery,—canst thou do any thing?"

Brother Martin took the child from the mother, who waited for his decision with as much eagerness as the criminal tried for his life listens for the verdict of the jury. Perceiving that the cause of the malady arose from the child's teething, he soon gave it immediate relief with his lancet, and returned it to the grateful mother, who could now almost have worshipped her visitors, declaring that they had saved her child, body and soul.

"Give the thanks where they are due,—to GOD Who sent us hither, my daughter," said brother Francis," and take it as a reward for your hospitality; and henceforth, as blessed Paul saith, "be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

"And now, holy Father," said Stigand, "partake of what we can set before you. Better should you have, if we had it. And I and my wife will wait upon you."

"We eat not," said brother Francis, "unless we all sit down together. It is not meet that the hosts should serve, while the guests feast."

"It shall be, Father, as you desire," replied the other: "but it befits not that we, poor Saxons, should sit down with Normans."

"I am a Saxon myself, my son," said brother Francis.

"I should have scarce thought so, Father," returned the other, "from your tongue; for your Saxon hath a courtly savour of Norman."

"Much have I mingled in the world," said the monk, "and thence, perhaps, have I lost something of the freshness of my father's language. But though I have sat at feasts in larger halls than this, never met I with fare that, with the sauce of my good hunger, did so please my palate before."

"Hear you of any news toward?" asked brother Martin, after a pause.

"None," said the Saxon, "save that there is hot pursuit made in these parts after Archbishop Becket. They say the king is marvellous much enraged that he did escape from him. God send him, say I, a good deliverance!"

"Amen," said both monks. "But," continued the younger, "hear you ought where he bestoweth himself?"

"That can none find out," was the answer. "They say that they can track him to Reading Abbey; but further than that they have no trace of him. Some say he lurketh there still; some that he is dead; and some that he hath taken ship and escaped into France."

"Went any with him when he fled from Northampton?" asked brother Martin.

"Two only, as I hear," answered his host. "Poor

man! he is sorely hunted of his enemies; and all, as father Edred telleth us, because he will not yield that holy Church should take detriment. But I trust GOD will deliver him out of their hands."

"Even," said Eadwith, "as He did that good Bishop, of whom Father Edred taught us, who was called Daniel, and was thrown into a den of lions, because he would not bow down before idols of wood and stone; and he told us furthermore how one Sir Habaccua, a knight of great valour, delivered him therefrom."

"I have read the story, daughter," remarked brother Francis, "though not quite in the way in which you tell it. And now, my good host, if you will spread a sheepskin or two for us near to the fire, right glad shall we be to lay us down thereon."

The skins having been spread, the visitors having commended themselves to GOD, and said Compline, according to the Benedictine use, lay down to rest. Often as each of them had felt the beauty of the three Psalms there appointed, the 4th, the 90th, and the 134th, and of S. Ambrose's Hymn, *Te lucis ante terminum*, never did they come so soothingly and so affectionately on their minds as now. When Stigand and his wife gave evident tokens of being in a profound sleep, the elder of the travellers said, in Norman French, to his companion, "Sleepest thou, Warel?"

"Not so, holy Father," answered the Sub-prior; "I am ready to act as your Paternity thinks best."

"Thou seest, my son," said the Archbishop, with what perils we are environed, and what hot pursuit there is made on our footsteps. Our flight must be indeed of all men noised abroad, when such a hovel as this is full of it."

"It was in my thought," observed Warel, "a thing ordered of GOD, that we should leave thy deacon Roland behind us at Reading. For, as your Paternity may perceive, the rumour goeth constantly that we be three in company."

"I would," said the Archbishop, "that we could leave this place while our hosts sleep; for this Stigand seemeth a shrewd fellow, although I think me—and I have been used to judge of men by their countenances—an honest. But, an we could get from the cottage without arousing them, we know not which way to turn, and the rain still poureth in cataracts."

"If you still, Father, hold purpose of embarking at Sandwich, we have nearly the whole length of Kent to traverse. Yet in your own diocese there be many places where to make ourselves known would not be inconvenient."

"Great terror must the king be in, when he sendeth an embassage so gloriously decked unto the Apostolic See; as thinking to overcome the exiled Bishop by the gawd of jewels, or blaze of gold; or that the chair of S. Peter would give judgment against the wronged and oppressed, because the oppressor is powerful, and the other hath no comforter."

"Nevertheless, with your Fatherliness's leave, it would seem well, if it be possible, that thou shouldest plead thy cause to our lord the Pope, before the others can reach his court."

"To GOD we have commended ourselves, my son, and the holy Church of Canterbury, now in extreme peril; and He will guide both it and ourselves as seemeth Him best. Our former purpose for Sandwich will we hold, partly because our tenants there are to us and to our cause well disposed; but chiefly because thither our son Roland goeth, by byeways, to meet us. Such haste as we may make, being on foot, and not daring to take horse, we will not be backward in; and if so be that we arrive in France first, we shall not grieve. But now, commending ourselves to the holy Mother of GOD, let us betake ourselves to sleep."

Stigand and his wife were up early: but earlier than their waking had the monks performed their devotions; and the *Jactamur heu quot fluctibus!* came seasonably to their consolation; a hymn which we shall take the liberty of thus paraphrasing:

"We lift our eyes, oppressed with ills,
Up to the everlasting hills;
Thither our groans and prayers we send,
Thither our hopes and longings tend!

Readier to hear than we to pray,
FATHER, Thy Hand shall guide our way;
And our infirmity is strong
In Thee, O GOD, our strength and song.

The threat'ning ills that round us swell,
O Mightier than the mightiest, quell;
And let the soul that hangs on Thee,
Feel that Thy Arm hath set her free.

Celestial glory shall array,
Ere long, this vesture of decay:
Glory that must by toil be won,
For who is crowned except he run?

O happy toil, whose end is blest
With joy, and calm, and endless rest!
Well may one sorrowing night be borne,
When gladness cometh with the morn!

Glory to GOD the FATHER be,
Now, and to all eternity;
To GOD the SON, as aye is meet,
To GOD the HOLY PARACLETE!"

It was a lovely autumn morning when, the simple meal ended, and the benediction bestowed, Becket and his follower set out, under the guidance of their host, to East Grinstead; intending from thence, by the most circuitous route, as being that which would be the least suspected, to reach Canterbury. The tract through which they passed is singularly beautiful; as uniting in itself, the wildness of Surrey, the richness of Kent, and a glorious horizon of the Sussex Downs. And no marvel, that by the time they bade their guide adieu, the hearts of the Archbishop and of Warel, feeling the silent influence of Nature's beauties, had assumed a calm and placid determination, to which they had been strangers since the hasty flight from Northampton.

CHAPTER VI.

Scarcely had two hours elapsed since Eadwith had been left by her guests, and Stigand had not yet returned, when she was surprised by the appearance of two knights, who, followed by a numerous band of retainers, reined up their foaming horses at the door.

"Ho, ho!" cried the foremost; "dwelleth Stigand here?"

"He dwelleth here, an please your lordship," said Eadwith, "but he is not now within."

"Lord me no lords, woman," returned the other, "but answer me plainly where he tarrieth?"

"He is gone, an please you, to guide certain poor monks on their way that tarried here last night."

"Then, by our Lady, we are right, Fitz-Urse!" said the other. "Woman, you must come along with us; your simplicity shall not avail you: you knew well enough that you were giving shelter to that

arch-traitor, Thomas of Canterbury. We will see that you obtain due punishment according to your deserts."

"I pray your honours," said the poor woman, trembling, "only to tarry till my husband cometh home; he knoweth no more herein than I; and he can set the matter straight with your honours."

"Which way went he?" asked Reginald Fitz-Urse.

"Towards East Grinstead," replied Eadwith: "your honours shall surely meet him if you ride thitherward."

"Marry, so we will," said the first speaker, who was none other than William de Tracy: "and thither shalt thou too; for thou art, I nothing doubt, playing us false herein."

"Then," said Eadwith, driven to desperation, "go if I must, I will; but I advise you for your own sakes, Sir Knights, to beware how you touch us: vassals are we of Odo of S. Augustine's, and right of *infang-thief** hath he in all his lands."

"By my faith, De Tracy," cried Fitz-Urse, "I believe she speaketh truth herein; and if the matter be so, we were best beware: for the king will owe us small thanks for trespassing on the immunities of the Church, now that it standeth him much to be on good terms with the Bishops who cleave unto him."

"To Canterbury are we bound, woman," said De Tracy, "and thither will we carry thee: to Odo

* *Infangen-theof*, Anglo-Saxon for *certain manorial rights*.

himself I will accuse thee of sheltering a traitor, and the shaven monk dareth not herein to shield thee. Here, Siward! thine is the best horse—make the dame mount behind thee. Saxon carry Saxon, they say. But what! surely we are not to be burthened with the brat?" he added, seeing that the mother was carefully folding it up in her bosom.

"Let her take it," returned Fitz-Urse: "small trouble will it be to us, or to Siward's horse." And Siward, with a fellow-feeling for his countrywoman, assisted her on, and gave the baby into her arms.

The following day, the repast was spread as usual in the hall of S. Augustine's at Canterbury. The Abbat was at the head of the long oak table; the monks in seemly order, arranged down its side. At his right was Eadbald the Prior; and a busy conversation was going on between these, in which the rest of the company joined but little. The huge heavy vaults of the Norman building, its small windows, and cold stone floor, the raised dais of oak, black and shining, the walls, adorned with frescoes of various legends, the stone lectorium,—all were tinted with the glare of the fire that burnt in the middle of the hall. The day was within the Octave of All Saints: and capons and venison pasty were plentifully displayed on the table; there was also stock-fish for those who preferred it; and Milton oysters, then of the same celebrity as now, were served out of the barrel. Mead there

was, and hippocras, and ale; but many of the holy monks drank nothing but water drawn from S. Augustine's well.

"A wonderful man, truly, is Thomas of Canterbury," said Eadbald to the Abbat: "how hath he set at nought prince and prelate at Northampton. How gallantly did he bear himself when he left the hall, as one that, trusting in GOD, feared not man nor what man could do unto him."

"They say, moreover," returned Odo, "that our good friend Warel bare himself as became a Churchman. But as to the Archbishop, strange it seemeth to me, and very marvellous, that we should have heard nothing where he bestoweth himself. Rumour saith that he was hospitably entertained one night of our brethren at Reading, and that two monks bare him company, one whereof was, in my thought, our Sub-prior; but how he came, or whither he went, none can guess; and divers marvellous rumours there be concerning him afloat, to which we, for our parts, yield no manner of credit."

"Some say that he still lieth at Reading," remarked the other, "and peradventure it is so. For how, save by special providence, he should escape so strict a search as that which it hath pleased the king to cause to be made after him, surpasseth my poor comprehension."

"Confidently is it asserted of some, that he hath been seen here in Canterbury since he departed from the Parliament. What to believe, I know not.

This, however, is therein comforting, because the variety of rumours must marvellously perplex his blood-thirsty enemies, whom GOD confound!"

As the Abbat pronounced this anathema, word was brought, by one of the servitor-brethren, that Sir William de Tracy and Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse desired to speak with the Abbat on business of great moment. Odo, greatly annoyed, and somewhat alarmed, desired him to pray the Knights to partake of their poor entertainment, and to agrace them with their presence in the refectory.

"These be two of his most pestilent enemies," quoth the Abbat, when the message was taken; "the knight De Tracy thirsteth like a lion for his blood. Who would think that he and the Lady Agnes were sprung of the same stock? As well might we look for the rose and the nightshade to bloom on the same tree, or the lamb and the lion to be brought up in the same fold."

"They have been little together," returned Eadbald, "if I have heard their story aright. Is it not so, holy Father?"

"Marvellous little," said Odo. "Sir Maurice de Tracy, the father, (whom GOD assoilzie!) died in Holy Land; and the son went incontinently to the Court, where he hath since tarried, falling in with ungodly and wicked men, who make a mock of all godliness, denying by their deeds the Holy Catholick Faith: but the Lady Agnes was brought up right tenderly of Sir Ranulph de Broc, and his

deceased lady, now with GOD, and great benefactors to us. And to his son, who is now in Holy Land, or, as we would rather say, on his journey thither, is she affianced."

"The Knights, holy Father," said the messenger, who now returned, "hold them excused; but desire that you will tarry no longer over the table than shall suit your earliest convenience. Rude and godless men are they," he continued, "and they have a woman in bondage with them, who tarrieth outside the house."

"Say we will come incontinently, my son," returned the Abbat. And the repast being now concluded, Odo rising up began the prayer.

"We yield thee, O merciful Father, most hearty thanks for all Thy benefits: Who livest and reignest for ever and ever." "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor," he continued. "And His righteousness," was the response, "remaineth for ever."—"I will bless the LORD at all times." "His praise," answered the Choir, "shall ever be in my mouth."—"O magnify," returned the Abbat, "the LORD with me!" "And let us exalt," responded the monks, "His Name together!"—"Blessed," said the Abbat, "be the name of the LORD!" "From this time forth and for evermore," they replied. Then he added, "Reward, we beseech Thee, O LORD, all those who shall do good deeds for Thy Name's sake, with eternal life!" And altogether they joined in the concluding suppli-

cation, "May the souls of the Faithful, through the mercy of GOD, rest in peace! Amen."

Leaving the refectory, Abbat Odo, who asked Eadbald to accompany him, bent his way to his private parlour; whither by his directions the Knights had been conducted.

"I am glad, Sir Abbat," began De Tracy in a contemptuous manner, "that your health, whereof you sent excuse to our Lord and Sovereign, permitteth you to enjoy again the pleasures of the refectory."

"Seeing, my son, that there be now some twenty days since I received that summons, cause for wonder there is none, that I should, though then prevented by ill-health from undertaking so long and perilous a journey, now have returned to my accustomed strength. But may I crave, Sir Knight, since you are not in general a frequenter of Religious houses, as fame reporteth, to what cause our poor Monastery is now indebted for the honour of your presence?"

"Two causes," began De Tracy, in a more respectful tone of voice; "two causes have moved me hither. The one, that I would fain enquire where you have bestowed the Lady Agnes my sister, whom, as I am given by credible witnesses to understand, the knight Sir Ranulph de Broc did, on his deathbed, commit unto your guardianship."

"Willingly, my son," replied Odo, "will I answer so reasonable a request. The Lady Agnes, who

was much cast down at the death of Sir Ranulph, whom God pardon, abideth with our venerable sister the Abbess of S. Mary's in this city; where, I nothing doubt, free access may you have to her, within such limits as are by the rules of that house touching such a case ordained."

"The second point, holy Father, wherein I would crave information, or rather redress, concerneth another matter. It pleased the King's grace to appoint me and this good knight, Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse, among divers others of his servants, to make inquisition on the flight of that traitor, Thomas of Canterbury; and both they and we used no small diligence in the matter. It was our good hap to trace him as far as Reading: but thence, for long time, we could obtain no further news concerning him. Two days ago, we did, upon enquiry in divers parts of Surrey, hear of certain two monks, who passing from one obscure village to another, and avoiding all highways and resorts of men, did still bend their course eastward; and moreover, as from those who had seen most of them we were well assured, the one of them differed not much in height, comportment, mien, and appearance, from him whom we sought. That night they lay at a lone cottage on the manor of Horne, which, as we hear, appertaineth to this house. Yestermorning early we beset the doors, but the quarry had escaped; and none found we therein, but one miserable woman, who told us that her husband was even then conducting

the monks whom she had lodged towards East Grinstead. This she freely confessed; but denied that she knew any further therein, either as to whom she had sheltered, or whither they were bound. Nothing doubting that she herein played us false, we set her on the horse of one of our retainers, and set forward to the town whereof she had told us. But neither in the road, nor elsewhere, met we her husband either going or returning. Which thing confirming us in these our suspicions, we thought good to bring her on hither, since the manors of S. Augustine's Abbey have, as we hear, the privilege of *infang-thief*. Else did we feel enmoved to have punished her, as she deserved, on the spot."

"Now, by S. Mary!" returned the Abbat, "but this passeth. Here is a woman, the property of this Abbey, dragged away by force by lawless men, on certain vague suspicions, which they are not able to verify. An I did that which ye deserve, I should lay complaint hereof before the king's grace incontinently."

"Small meed, holy Father, wouldst thou gain by that. The king is enraged against Becket to that degree, that his shelterers would find little favour in his eyes. Nay, rather thou owest us thanks for that we have done. If we had accused this woman before thee, thou must either have summoned her to Canterbury, to be judged in thy court, or appointed a commission to take cognizance of her cause where she dwelleth. Of both the

trouble and expense of which thou hast been eased by our setting her here before thee; and, as I am belted knight, she hath been well cared for on the way."

"Sir Knight," replied Odo, "seek not to make that which is unjustifiable worse, by seeking to justify it. Cause the woman to be brought into the great hall, where we do accustomably administer justice. And there will we join thee."

The Knights withdrew; and the Abbat, in great perplexity, walked up and down the room. At length he said, "What are we herein to do, brother Eadbald? A sore infraction of our privileges is this that these Knights have done; yet no less certain is it, that had this information been laid before us against the woman whom they speak of, we must at all times, and more especially now that the king observeth the Church with so jealous eyes, have enquired either personally or by deputy into the accusation."

"If I might advise, holy Father," said Eadbald, who like the Abbat himself was very cautious by nature, "I would let the matter take its own way. We may not strive with the civil power therein. Thou canst well favour this poor woman; and, as far as thou canst without open manifestation of prejudice in her behalf, thou art bound to do it: but further, as I think, none can blame thee for not going."

"I am inclined to follow thy advice," returned

Odo; "the rather that the accusation even if, which I much doubt me it is not, well founded, will nevertheless be hard to prove. Lead on to the hall."

CHAPTER VII.

The news soon spread through the Abbey that a woman was to be tried by the lord Abbat, on suspicion of having sheltered Thomas of Canterbury. The hall was soon filled; the monks stood by the side walls, the chair of state was left for the Abbat on the dais; the Knights had taken a seat at the lower end of the hall, and their retainers with Eadwith, who still held her baby, clustered behind them. The silver cross gleamed in the archway; and immediately afterwards the Abbat and a few monks entered: he passed up the middle of the room, and took his seat in the chair prepared for him. All who were sitting rose as he advanced.

"We have been told," he began, "that the two Knights, William de Tracy and Reginald Fitz-Urse, have, out of their abundant zeal for the king's honour, though with some neglect of the privileges granted to this Abbey by King Ethelbert of blessed

memory, and confirmed thereto by succeeding kings and princes, as well Saxon as Norman, down to the present time, have, on a certain manor of ours, arrested, and by force carried before us, the wife of one of our serfs, alleging against her that she gave reception and shelter to Thomas, by Divine loving-kindness, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury and Metropolitan of All England: he, the said Thomas, being a man then proscribed as a traitor—whether rightly or wrongly skilleth us not now to enquire—and bringing thereby with him a traitor's portion on those who give him harbourage and comfort. This have we learnt from the said Knights themselves, who be here in court to make their words good; and now we desire to learn from the prisoner herself what she knoweth herein. Come forth, woman! and speak boldly; for GOD shield we should not do justice to the meanest."

Eadwith, hitherto kept back by her captors, came hastily forward, and gathering courage from her despair, said, "O my lord Abbat, stand my good lord, I pray you! I know nothing of what these Knights have laid to my charge; I never saw the Archbishop; I never gave him refuge wittingly; and if I did it unwittingly, I pray you to pardon me."

"I would wish thee," replied the Abbat, "laying aside all fear, to speak boldly, and to lay open to us the whole of the matter from the beginning. Tell us, therefore, how these monks came to you, and how of you they were received."

"Pleaseth your lordship, it was two nights agone that I was sitting alone in the house of my husband, Stigand, a serf of your reverence, with this baby, then, as I deemed, dying; and my husband was gone forth to fetch Father Edred the chaplain, lest the infant should die unbaptized. Then did two monks present themselves at the door, and beg, in our Lady's name, for shelter. And I, being ever taught of Father Edred that to give shelter to the hungry and houseless was one of the good works of Holy Church, did take them in and lodge them; and my husband, when he came back, did aid me in ministering unto them. He that was the elder did baptize my baby; and he that was the younger, and seemed to be his *learning knight*,* did cure him of that which he ailed. And the next day they went on their way; and my husband went forth to guide them. And then came these Knights, and by force took me away with them."

"Then," inquired the Abbat, "thou knewest nothing of who these men were, or whither they were bound?"

"No," she replied: "as God shall judge me, I have told the truth, and all the truth herein."

"Sir Knight," said the Abbat, "the story which this woman telleth seemeth to me likely in all points. What! would you have had her drive away two monks that begged on a cold tempestuous night for shelter? Would you have had her leave them to

* *Leorning-cniht*, Anglo-Saxon for *disciple*.

perish? Shame on the teaching of the pastor, to whom she belongeth, if thus hard-hearted she had been, the rather when they performed two works of mercy in her house."

"My lord Abbat," replied the Knight, who knew where the old man's weak point lay, "it is manifest that you are no well-wisher to the king in his quarrel with the haughty Church of Canterbury; otherwise you would grant me a larger measure of justice herein. Here do we bring a positive accusation, and you put us off by telling us it is not likely. I am ready to swear that this woman knoweth more herein than she hath said; and I demand that she be put to the torture, to the verifying of her innocence."

"By thine own confession," retorted the Abbat, "thou hast no further means of knowing the truth of this matter than we have; and the case being so, how canst thou swear that *that* was, which thou thinkest, and only thinkest, likely to have been?"

"I am a plain knight," returned De Tracy, "and understand little of thy scholastical niceties; and thy arguments, howsoever they may stand thee in stead here, will little serve thee before the king, to whom I shall appeal."

"Thou art a plain villain," muttered Eadbald to Odo, "that there can be little doubt of; but what purposeth your Fatherliness to do herein?"

"I demand to be sworn," persevered the Knight. "Will your lordship grant me my desire herein?"

"If we agrace him in this," said Odo aside to the Prior, "what will become of the woman, who, on our conscience, is innocent? And yet how to refuse him, without incurring the king's great displeasure?"

"Had we been able to foresee how bold-faced a villain this would have approved himself, we would not have granted him to accuse the woman at first; but would have resisted him as a violator of our rights. But now, having granted him one thing, we can scarce refuse him the other."

"Does your Reverence hear our demand," said Reginald Fitz-Urse; "or must we depart without justice?"

"I hear and grant it, my sons," replied the Abbat. "Let the Book of the Evangele be given to Sir William de Tracy, and Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse, that they may be sworn to the truth of their allegation."

The oath of the accusers was then taken; and a silence followed.

"Daughter," said the Abbat, "the accusations here preferred against thee we may not reject. We would fain have believed thy innocence, and would fain hope it still. But such be our laws, that there only remain two ways in which thy innocence can be made good: the one, that by a champion of knightly rank thou makest plain thy freedom of that which is laid to thy account. Art thou prepared to do this?"

"Oh, my good lord," said the poor woman, "how

can one like me have a knight to my friend? If that way alone I can be saved, I must indeed perish!"

"Besides this," said the Abbat, "there yet remaineth the direct appeal to GOD, Who is the searcher of all hearts, in the trial by ordeal. This, if thou art prepared to demand, we are prepared to give."

"Then," said the poor mother, "to GOD will I appeal: for Father Edred hath taught us that He is the Helper of them that be innocent, and have none other defender; and He knoweth my innocence in this thing; and your lordship beholdeth that I have none other earthly friend."

"Let a note be made hereof," said the Abbat, "and let it be read for the satisfaction of all men." A monk, who acted as notary, drew out the document, and it was read as follows:

"Sir William de Tracy, knight, and Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse, knight, make oath and say, that Eadwith, the wife of Stigand, a vassal of this Abbey of S. Augustine, on the manor of Horne, did knowingly and of set purpose receive and entertain Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, in her house, on this third day of November last past; and they furthermore aver their belief that she, the said Eadwith, knoweth where the said Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, now bestoweth himself; contrary to the proclamation by our gracious Sovereign Lord, King Henry, at the Council of Northampton, lately issued. And

the said Eadwith saith that she did not wittingly and of intent give harbourage unto the said Thomas as before. And being asked if she would by her champion compurge herself, she made answer, that she had none. And being further asked, if she would confess herself to be guilty, she made answer, that she appealeth unto God. And Odo, Lord Abbat of S. Augustine's in Canterbury, upon these premises considered, giveth order that it shall be as by the accused is required: and chargeth both her, and her accusers, and all men herein concerned, that they present themselves in the Abbey church at the hour of three this afternoon, there to follow out the appeal in form and manner prescribed by the Holy Church."

"And, in the mean time," said Abbat Odo, "we shall take fitting care that the accused be bestowed in some meet house in the city, and that a priest be allowed to visit her, but none else. Until which time we dissolve this court."

The great bell of the Cathedral and of S. Ethelbert's Tower had tolled three, when the Abbat, preceded and followed more gorgeously than usual, crossed the great square, and entered the western door of the church. He wore a cope of purple velvet, wrought down the sides with figures of saints in raised gold; an alb of the finest silk, and of a pale pinkish hue; and the white linen amice was kept in its place by a small pellet of lead at each end. The golden staff, with the crook turned

inwards, and displaying on its interior flower-knop a Holy Lamb curiously wrought of great rubies, and the silver cross, flowered richly, and having at its extremities the Evangelistic symbols, preceded him. On entering the nave, he found it thronged with spectators: he had commanded that many should be admitted, in order that the fairness of the whole proceedings might have the greater number of witnesses. At its upper end, in a chair provided for the occasion, sat Alan de Grier, Mayor of Canterbury, with some of the ealdermen, and the sheriff-deputy; to whom, as representatives of the civil power, the prisoner would be delivered over, in case of being found guilty. The knights were in attendance; and the prisoner having been sent for, was set opposite to them: both were immediately on the western side of the stone roodscreen we have mentioned before; the accusers on the north, the accused on the south. The light tracery of the roodscreen, which was then only just put up, and consequently of Early English date, prevented hardly at all the Abbat and the monks, as they filled the stalls of the Choir, from seeing and being seen by, those who crowded the nave.

The *Pater Noster*, and *Deus in adjutorium*, wherewith the Church Catholick then commenced all her services, having been said, the psalms were chanted. And it was enough to quell the stoutest sinner, who had sworn to an accusation, which, if he did not know to be false, he could not

know to be true, and which he *did* know to have been brought out of malice; and if reporters spake true, it did blanch the cheek of Sir William de Tracy, when the sublime Gregorian chant burst forth: "Why boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant, that thou canst do mischief? Whereas the goodness of GOD endureth yet daily. Thy tongue imagineth mischief, and with lies thou cuttest like a sharp razor. * * Therefore shall GOD destroy thee for ever; He shall root thee out of the land of the living. The righteous shall see this, and fear, and shall laugh him to scorn." And when, ceasing for a moment, it swelled still more terribly with the imprecations that an ungodly man should be above the deceiver; that Satan should stand at his right hand; that in his trial he should be condemned; that his prayer should be turned into sin; that his children should be fatherless, his wife a widow: that the extortioner might consume all he had; that in the next generation his name should be clean put out; and that, finally, the curse might come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones: and concluded with the prayer, "Help me, O Lord my GOD! O save me according to Thy mercy: and they shall know how that this is Thy hand, and that Thou, LORD, hast done it: though they curse, yet bless Thou! and let them be confounded that rise up against me! but let Thy servant rejoice."

Then the iron, which was to form the ordeal,

being brought in, the Abbat pronounced over it a benedictory prayer: that the God who had of old time appointed the ashes of a burnt offering to decide between the guilty and the innocent, would be pleased, of His mercy, to bless those His creatures to the discovery of the truth, so making clear the innocent, and condemning the guilty, that virtue might prevail, calumny be confounded, His holy Church be increased, and His holy Name glorified. The plough-shares were then taken away to be heated in the furnace.

Descending from his throne, the Abbat approached the Holy Doors, and standing at the entrance of the Choir, exhorted each party, if they valued their salvation, as they would not tempt God to His uttermost indignation, as they would leave some place of repentance, as they would not be shunned as a thing polluted in this world, and a portion for the lake of fire and brimstone in the next,—that even now, at the eleventh hour, they would confess the truth; casting themselves upon the mercy of Almighty God, and betaking themselves to the discipline of Holy Church, and thus endeavour to obtain forgiveness in the last day.

It was observed, that although Abbat Odo, assuming the part of an impartial judge, endeavoured to speak equally to both parties, the whole air and manner of his address shewed that he was thinking rather of the accusers than the accused. No apparent impression having been produced by his

words, he next addressed himself to the latter; and exhorted her to confidence in the wisdom and goodness of the Father of the fatherless, and the Judge of the widows, assuring her that she might well depend on His exerting His power in an extraordinary manner, in a case like this, where His Church appealed to Him as the fountain of Truth, when from human eyes it seemed hidden. Then, causing the crowd to move to the north and south sides of the nave, the Abbat advanced into its eastern portion, followed by the monks from the Choir: the Prior, with some others, and the accused (who, by the strange power that danger sometimes has over a strong mind, seemed transformed from the peasant-woman into the heroine,) retired to the west end, where Eadwith was blindfolded; one of the knights' retainers examining the bandages to preclude the possibility of any collusion. While the servitor-brethren were bringing in the plough-shares glowing from the furnace, and laying them on the pavement at irregular distances, the anxiety of the assembled crowd was intense; and many a dark and scowling look was cast on the knights, who evidently, though they would have scorned to own it, felt anxious and uneasy under the publick gaze. A line of monks was then formed on each side of the fiery road: the wooden shoes of Eadwith were taken off, and herself led to its western end: the Abbat advanced to its eastern extremity, and having made the sign of the cross over the burning materials,

bade her, in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST, to come to him. On she came, with hesitating steps, threading her perilous way. Twice or thrice the bystanders thought that she had scorched her feet—still she came forward, unharmed—now there are but four more bars—now but three—now but two—now she is free, if only one more step be right—it is taken—and she is in safety! The Abbat, casting his eyes to heaven, and solemnly exclaiming, "THOU hast maintained Thy right, and Thy cause: Thou art set in the Throne that judgest right," stopped Eadwith, and announced her acquittal. But the change from terror to joy was too much for her, and she fainted at his feet. While the infirmarer and some of the by-standers stepped forward to her assistance, the Abbat, turning to the accuser, exclaimed,—"For you, recreant and perjured knights! the shame of chivalry, and disgrace of Christendom, pollute this holy place no longer with your vile presences. GOD hath delivered the poor and oppressed from your blood-thirsty covetousness: His hand is stretched out to save those whom none else would save. Go, miserable traitors! lest the sacredness of the place protect you not: and doubt not that Holy Church will deliver you over to an anathema for this deed." The interference of the hand of GOD seemed to inspire the old man with a courage above his nature; and although De Tracy twice, with a look of the deadliest hatred,

laid his hand on his misericorde, he and his companion slunk away abashed, and followed by the suppressed curses of that vast assembly. As the porter opened the great gates to them, Reginald Fitz-Urse offered him a piece of money: but the old man crying out, "Thy money perish with thee!" cast it after him.

In the mean time Eadwith had recovered her senses: and the Abbat, after cheering her up, said, "Thy good deeds and hospitality, my daughter, as doubt not they shall be rewarded of GOD, so they shall not go unrewarded of men. Henceforth shalt thou be the wife of Stigand the FREEMAN: half a hide of land here in Canterbury will I bestow on him, and twelve golden pieces on thee; and that son of thine whom thou didst bring before us shall, if thou art minded to dedicate him to Holy Church, be brought up, at mine own expense, in this house."

Eadwith replied by mingled tears and blessings: and none were there of the assembled multitude who blessed not the munificence of Odo the good Lord Abbat.

CHAPTER VIII.

Meanwhile, pursuing their dangerous journey through Kent, the Archbishop and his faithful attendant sought out the most untrodden byeways, carefully avoiding all large towns; and though thus occasionally compelled to trace a circuitous course, steadily and with good courage they held on for Sandwich. At night they rested in some friendly cell, such as were the offshoots of the larger religious houses; sometimes they trusted themselves to a poor Saxon hovel, and once they took shelter in a deserted barn. The more he was surrounded with dangers and harassed with cares, the higher did Thomas of Canterbury rise above them; and comforting himself with the thought of the good confession he was honoured by witnessing on earth, look forward with joy to the rest which remained for him in heaven. Word of complaint never escaped his lips; and even Warel's enthusiasm in

the good cause derived fresh strength, as he saw the vigour and heavenly constancy wherewith the Archbishop supported the trial of his protracted wanderings.

In the mean time, the king and parliament were not idle. They resolved on sending an embassy to the Pope, to endeavour to procure the Primate's deposition: trusting to the influence of the king's name, (more especially in the then divided state of the Church,) to the magnificence of the retinue, and the eloquence and learning of the prelates who were to accompany it, Gilbert, Bishop of London, and Hilary, Bishop of Chichester; the latter esteemed the most eloquent of the whole Episcopal College. Fully aware of the necessity, if possible, of obtaining a prior hearing, all possible expedition was used in forwarding the equipment of the ambassadors from the court of England.

Our tale must now for a moment turn to Sir William de Tracy, who, after his foil in the Abbey of S. Augustine, left his companion Fitz-Urse at a hostelrie, and bent his way with all speed to the Convent of S. Mary. He hoped to reach it before the news of his discomfiture should have become known to its inmates. But, as it happened, the sisters were at Vespers; and, as the trial and its event was bruited abroad the city by the multitude who had been present in the church, Agnes de Tracy had been informed of the whole train of circumstances, before she learnt that her brother was desirous of speaking with her.

"Tell him," she said, "that dearly as I love him, I would rather have seen him on his hearse, than that he should have been guilty of that which I have heard to-day. The father dieth for GOD in Holy Land; the son accuseth the helpless and poor, and is of GOD manifestly overthrown. Woe is me therefore! Yet tell him this, that since so grievously hath he outraged all justice, and so rebelliously presumed against Holy Church, I will not give him sight or hearing till he hath repaired to his utmost the injury he hath done, and hath received absolution for the same."

The message was accordingly delivered, and William de Tracy left the Convent, breathing vengeance against all whom it contained; and shortly afterwards was on his way, with his retinue, to Dover, intending thence to pass into France.

It was the Feast of S. Martin; and a more sunny day never verified the adage of the Martinmas summer. The bright waves of the English channel were crested with light, and danced joyfully to the northerly gale which bore onwards two galleys to their destination. The one was gay and glistering to the eye, and freighted with a gallant crew of Earls, Barons, and Knights: a pennon with the royal Planta-genista floated from the mast; on deck was the sweet harmony of wind instruments; there was the flashing of armour, and the glitter of splendid vests. The tower, raised on the dais of the deck, was covered with silver hangings; the rude square canvass swelled in the wind; and the sea foamed

beneath the two banks of oars. The other vessel, an old weather-beaten bark, whose rough sides gave token of many a midnight battle with the channel waves, trusted entirely to her sails: but by her more commodious shape, and by the freight, seemed to hold fair rivalry with the former. Standing near its beaked head were two Benedictine monks, engaged sometimes in converse with each other, sometimes in marking the nearing shores. That vessel carried the bravest defender of England's Church to his appeal. The crew of each ship knew who were borne along in the other: there was no mistaking the royal galley; and the Sandwich vessel in which Becket was crossing, was known by the account which the Commissioners had received of it ere they left Dover. Onwards both vessels bore, towards the fair port of S. Omer; the surf-beaten shore, sunny hills, and green fields of France gleaming brighter and brighter across the waves.

"An he maketh not more speed," said the Earl of Leicester, "the proud Saxon Primate will be arrested as soon as he setteth foot in foreign land. That old hulk traileth but lazily through the water, while our galley glideth along as swiftly as tercel from a lady's hand."

"I would not for a thousand crowns," observed Sir William de Tracy, who, by means of his friendship with the Earl of Leicester, had been allowed to join the Commissioners, and had taken the opportunity of putting the best gloss that he could on his

late discomfiture; "I would not for a thousand crowns that he escapeth us. Let us only tell our own tale to King Louis, and the second comer will scarcely be believed."

"God forbid, my lord," said the hypocritical Foliot to Leicester, "that we should wrest justice in this matter! Our Lady be my witness that I go about this thing with a right heavy and sorrowful heart; and were it not that our lord the King hath straitly charged and commanded my service herein, I had rather have bestowed myself in my own diocese, than have been called off from works of charity and devotion, which GOD He knoweth we love better than worldly and carnal pursuits."

"Surely, surely, your lordship saith well," answered Hilary of Chichester, glad of an opportunity to shew his learning; "even as S. Ambrose teacheth, *Quod episcopis minime deceat terrenorum appetitus;* that is to say, my lords," he added, turning to the lay-peers, "that the pursuing of secular matters formeth no fit occupation for him that is a Bishop."

"Nevertheless," said De Tracy, "it seemeth to me, under your favour, holy Fathers, that Bishops do engage therein with zeal inferior to none: that ship yonder proveth me that I speak truly. And methinketh that if ye are backward in this business, ye do exert yourselves therein with marvellous great self-denial."

"For therein lieth, my son, the virtue of a

Bishop," returned Gilbert of London. "He that knoweth not how to give up his own will to others, is little meet to be called to that office in the Church."

"Even so testifieth S. Hilary," said the Bishop of Chichester, "in that place where he saith, *Eum autem, qui ad hunc ordinem inscriptus est, vigilem esse et in omnibus sobrium, ipsa natura docet.*"

"In the meanwhile," remarked Robert of Leicester, "it seemeth to me that we be fallen somewhat behind our enemy. Sir Captain," he added, addressing that officer, "think you there is any fear lest La Blanche Dâme (so was Becket's vessel named) should reach her port first?"

"It standeth, an it please your lordship," replied the captain, "on the wind. If that remaineth as it is, then do our oars tell, and we shall gain the day; but if it riseth, La Blanche Dâme is the more used to these seas, and is better rigged, and lighter freighted, and I fear me will outstrip us."

"Think you that it will arise?" asked Leicester, anxiously.

"To the best of my poor skill," the captain answered, looking to windward as he spoke, "it will not."

"Marry, all well!" cried the other. "Spare not your best skill, and it shall turn to your profit. My lords," he added, "methinketh the music waxeth tedious. Sir Hugh de Morville, thou usedst to be of much repute in *the joyous science:* I pray you to give us some small essay thereof."

"Marry, and very willingly," said the party addressed; "only I would your lordship had a better minstrel." So saying, Sir Hugh, a young knight of a prepossessing countenance, quick dark eye, fresh colour, and peaked auburn beard, sang in the Langue d'oc, a ballad,* which in English might run thus:

It was the good King Charles of France, and the twelve good Knights his band;
And a storm on the sea fell suddenly, as they steered for the Holy Land.
Then out and spake Sir Roland: In arms I fear no foe;
But the use of all, I ween is small, when the sea is raging so.
Out spake Sir Holger, a Danish knight: The harp I touch right well;
But to tame the sea is too hard for me, and abate the surf and swell.
It was the good Sir Oliver, right gloomy was his cheer;
I care not, quo' he, what my lot may be, but I grieve for my Albaclere.
Then out and spake Sir Ganelois, but his words no utterance found,
With my good will ye might drown your fill, so I were but safe and sound.
It was the good Archbishop then, and sorely did he sigh;
Alack, that a band for Holy Land beneath the waves must lie!
I would the fiends that raise the storm, quoth the Count of the iron heart,
For the good deeds I've render'd them, would let us hence depart.
O then spake out Sir Ramis stout: The two best things, I wiss,
Were skill to think, and wine to drink, when winds blow hard like this.
It was Riòl, an aged knight: I see, quo' he, the beach;
And on its shores my scattered bones to wind and wave must bleach.

* Imitated from Uhland's Der Küng Karl war über Meor.

Out spake Sir Guy, a fair young knight, well skill'd i' th' joyous art:
Had I a tassel-gentle's wings, from this good ship I'd dart.
O would I were, quoth Count Garun, in the halls of my own countrie,
I'd rather quaff the red red wine, than taste the briny sea.
Then out and spake a knight of fame, Sir Lambert was he hight;
'Twere better we should eat the fish than they should o'er us fight.
It was Sir Godfrey then that spake, a valiant knight and tall:
If 'tis hard to me to taste the sea, 'tis just as hard for all.
King Charles sat still, and held the helm, nor word he deigned to say;
He watch'd the tide, and the storm he eyed, until it passed away.

"Ha, ha!" cried Leicester, "singularly well done of King Charles; and singularly well said of his knights, too, and worthy of a better fate than Roncesvalles. Look!" he continued, "where is La Blanche Dâme now?"

All eyes followed his; and the breeze having slackened during the song, the vessel he named had evidently fallen much behind, and was still losing way. The mirth and clamour on the royal galley grew louder: wine was called for, and the speedy downfal of Thomas of Canterbury was pledged by the laymen; the Churchmen, though declaring their concurrence in the wish, deeming it more decorous to abstain.

Thus, with gaiety and uproar, the vessel which bore the great and mighty of this world, sped on her easy way. Turn we to that which bore the earthly fortunes of the Church.

Becket and Warel, fully aware of the dangers which would beset them if they were outstripped by the royal galley, had enquired of their captain, who knew the dignity of his passengers, his opinion as to the respective fleetness of the rivals; and had received a similar answer to that given by the other to the Earl of Leicester.

"Leave the event, my son," he said to Warel, "to Him who governeth the winds and the sea. He hath so marvellously preserved us in our perils heretofore, that I doubt me not His hand will still be with us for good." Warel still continued somewhat anxiously to eye the distance to be traversed between themselves and the shore, and calculate mentally the respective speed of the vessels. "If the ethnick poet," added Becket, "could represent the sea-god as pushing forward with his hand them that sacrificed to him, will not the GOD, Whose we are and Whom we serve, deliver us, who are suffering in His cause, and have called upon His Name?"

"But behold, holy Father, the sail swelleth not as it did; of a surety it slackeneth. And look, I pray you, at the captain, how he looketh gloomily towards the quarter whence cometh the wind."

"Cease, my son, I pray you," returned the Archbishop, "from these vain surmisings. Of a surety they that be with us are more than they that be with them."

"Thou knowest, holy Father, that I care not for

myself; but it is for thyself and the Church that I fear."

"Fear for the Church?" returned the Archbishop. "That were strange in him that knoweth how, being founded on S. Peter, as on an immoveable rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against Her. And for ourselves, we are ready not only to be bound, but to die for Her. Ask they for our captivity? Willingly will we abide bonds, knowing that we are yet free. Ask they for our blood? We will yield it gladly; knowing that the scars of the martyrs shall turn to ornaments of beauty, so that in all things GOD be glorified."

The captain of the ship now stepped forward with the intelligence that the wind had so much abated, that he feared the case was hopeless.

"Do thy best, good captain," said the Prelate, "and leave the rest to GOD." The Archbishop then knelt devoutly, and the Sub-prior followed his example; and as they prayed they heard faint snatches, from the royal galley, of Sir Hugh de Morville's song. But ere they ended, and while the profane health was passing round the gay courtiers, a 'cat's paw' glistened on the waves; and in a few moments the Prelate's vessel, feeling its influence, stooped courteously to the waves and sped along.

And now the two vessels were nearly abreast; and the harbour of Gravelines, with an entrance allowing only one ship to pass at a time, was full in

sight, some quarter of a league before them. The rowers plied their utmost efforts; the courtiers gazed impatiently on the lessening space, or paced anxiously around the tower. The Prelate, fixed on the same spot, stood with his arms folded in a cross on his breast, and looked calmly and trustfully onward. So they sped forward; and the most experienced eye could not pronounce where the victory would be. At length the breeze lulled a little, and the royal galley bore onwards.

"Two golden pieces each to the rowers," cried the Earl of Leicester in exultation, "if they take us in first!"

The Archbishop said in a tone audible only to Warel, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the Name of the LORD of Hosts, the GOD of the armies of Israel, Whom thou hast defied. *O Sancte Martine, ora pro nobis!*"

Again the breeze sprung up behind them; the sails swelled out light and full, and La Blanche Dâme, leaping forwards, outstripped her rival, and entered the narrow jaws of the harbour ere the royal galley had shipped her oars for the passage.

CHAPTER IX.

Agnes de Tracy and the Prioress of S. Mary's sat in the apartment usually occupied by the latter. It was not large, and might not altogether have accorded with modern notions of comfort. But it had all that the Superior of the little convent wished; and in good sooth was exactly in keeping with the place. The walls were hung with tapestry, representing various scriptural subjects: the Fall, for example; the Beasts going two and two into the Ark; the Sacrifice of Isaac; and the Sun and Moon standing still at the bidding of Joshua. The ceiling was of vaulted stone; the floor partly covered with mats, and partly strewed with rushes. One of the windows, with its wide splay and narrow slit, looked out into the second court, which was the burying-ground of the sisters, and which was marked by the Cross in the middle, wrought after the fashion of the times in the shape of a

circle on a somewhat pyramidal shaft, and representing our Blessed Saviour (so Catholick sculpture has ever represented Him) as stretching out His arms, and thereby seeming to invite the whole world to Himself. Around it were the thousand devices into which the cross was worked, each marking out where some sister, having departed with the sign of faith, was now resting in the sleep of peace. The other window looked out into the orchard, or hort-yard, as the Prioress might have called it; where the wind was making rude sport with the red leaves which yet hung on the trees. Agnes was engaged on her tapestry; the other sat with a book of devotion.

"Even so," said the Prioress, "my daughter, is the life of man as be these leaves, at the funeral whereof the wind maketh mournful yet pleasant music. But beholdest thou not how, as the branches do clash one against another, of themselves they perforce make the sign of the cross, teaching us thereby in what we be to put our trust. It is a fit day, verily, for the funeral of one like unto our departed sister Margaret, whose soul GOD pardon."

"Amen!" replied Agnes de Tracy. "I have heard wise men say, my mother, that there may be traced that holy sign in almost every thing that we behold both in nature and in art; and I do partly believe it."

"Surely, my daughter," answered the other, "it is so. The ship, as it glideth by upon the sea, and

the bird, as it cleaveth the air, and the road, as it goeth winding over the moor, and cutteth his neighbour road, and the stars in their silent courses, and the long clouds at evening, all these do set out unto us the figure of the Holy Cross."

"I scarce know how, my mother," said Agnes, "to express unto you the calm and peace of mind that I have felt, since, by our Lady's favour, my abode was thrown into this house. Indeed, right happy I was with my dear father, Sir Ranulph de Broc, on whose soul GOD have mercy! yet knew I not the holiness and the peacefulness of the ever-coming seasons of prayer, and the midnight hymns, and the opening and shutting of the day with the blessing of our heavenly Father, even as do the flowers with the dew of heaven. And I do exceedingly love the greyness and the repose of these old walls, where so many humble souls have been at peace with their GOD, and whence so many have gone home to Him."

"Thou wouldst make a happy sister, my poor child," said the Abbess, with a mournful smile.

"I fear not," said Agnes, looking down; "I have that which bindeth me far too nearly to the world. Nathless, I do look upon them that have here dedicated their love to Him that deserveth it best, as far happier than I am."

At this moment the bells of the Priory church began to chime; not to toll, for the Church then allowed no such expression of grief for the depar-

ture of one of her children: and the Abbess rising, and speaking as though of the living, said, "Time is it that we do now visit Sister Margaret;" and followed by Agnes, she proceeded to the hall, where the sisters were already assembled around the remains of their companion. The departed one, now laid in her coffin, still wearing the Benedictine dress and the fair veil, looked like one who had fallen into a sleep deeper and calmer than that of earth: in her hands was placed a cross; tapers were burning at her head and at her feet; and ever and anon the sweet voices of the sisters chanted one of the penitential psalms. The procession was soon formed. Two Benedictine priests, in copes of dark purple, went first; then came the Abbess with her silver staff; then the nuns, two and two, the bearers of the coffin being in the midst. Arrived at the church, the coffin was set down on its hearse in the nave, the tapers still burning about it. The rest, going into the choir, sang the psalms; the 116th, with its antiphon, or key-note, "I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living;" the 120th, with its antiphon, "Woe is me, that I am constrained to dwell in Mesech;" the 121st, with that verse, "The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil; yea, it is even He that shall keep thy soul;" then the 118th; and afterwards the priests began, "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me;" "Blessed," replied the choir, "are the dead which die in the Lord." "From the gates of hell," they continued; "De-

liver," answered the sisters, "her soul, O LORD!" "Requiescat," chanted the Priests, "in pace. Amen." "Incline," they proceeded, "O LORD, Thine ears to our petitions, wherein we beseech Thy loving-kindness, that Thou wouldst be pleased to give unto the soul of Thy servant Margaret, whom Thou hast removed from this world, a habitation of light and rest; and wouldst grant unto it the company of Thy Saints in Paradise. Amen."

Then the coffin was borne to its long resting-place; at the head of the grave was a banner wrought with the instruments of Crucifixion, imaging the victory that Holy Church hath over the power of death; there was also the silver Cross. And the sorrowing company stood round; and there was Christian hope in every face; and in the citadel of death were scattered on all sides memorials of Him Who by His death hath overcome death; and there were none of the Pagan trappings and hired mourners of modern funerals. Yet were there tears, as the Priest, looking on the lifeless form, and casting earth on the coffin, said "I commend thy soul to GOD the FATHER Almighty, and thy body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life."

The coffin was then lowered into its home: and all kneeling, the Priest continued, "We commend, O LORD, into Thy Hands, the soul of this Thy servant; beseeching Thee, O Saviour of the world,

that to her, for whom Thou didst descend into this world, Thou wouldst give a place in the bosom of Abraham. Acknowledge, O GOD, a sheep of Thine Own flock, a lamb of Thine Own fold, a sinner of Thine Own redeeming. So that, by the intercession of Thy Blessed Saints and Martyrs, she, being freed from the chains of the flesh, may attain to the glory of Thine eternal kingdom, through the merits of JESUS CHRIST, our LORD. Amen."

After this followed the supplication for the souls of all the departed faithful; and then the terrible *Dies Iræ* burst forth from the Choir; softening in its close to the pathetic petition,

"LORD of Mercy, JESU blest!
Grant her Thine eternal rest!"

This was the first funeral that Agnes de Tracy had ever attended; and no marvel if it led her, as she paced slowly up and down the narrow cloisters, to muse deeply on the holy retirement and peace of a life so spent as had been hers whom she had just seen committed to the hallowed earth; and by contrast to look forward to her own, turbulent as it was like to be with wars and civil contention. For Ranulph de Broc had already distinguished himself, though so young, both in the court and in the field; and in those times, when, from the warlike genius of the Plantagenet kings, so different from the mild rule of the descendants of S. Louis, the English Knights and Barons were continually engaged in one strife or another, it was impossible that the wife

of one whose lot among them would be conspicuous, could have other than a lot of many cares and of much worldliness. She looked onwards nevertheless, 'bating not a jot of heart or hope,' expecting the time when Ranulph, full of glory acquired from the Infidel possessors of the Sepulchre, would return to her, and lead such a life as his father had led before him; a life, if not without its trials, not without its joys and comforts; and, above all, not without its means of advancing the glory of GOD, and the good of His Church.

CHAPTER X.

Archbishop Becket on his arrival at S. Omer, where Hubert the Deacon was awaiting him, betook himself to the Abbey of S. Bertin; and there, in a lonely hermitage, by the advice of the Fathers, lay hid till the English ambassadors had left the town. In a few days they departed to the French Court at Compeigne; where they met with notoriously bad success. Louis, who held correspondence by letter with the Archbishop, on reading the letter addressed to him by Henry, came to the words, *Thomas, late Archbishop.* "*Late* Archbishop?" he said; "who hath deposed him? I am, as your Master is, a king; yet have I not authority to depose, of myself, the meanest clerk in my dominions." On the contrary, Warel and Hubert, who also presented themselves at Compeigne, were received by King Louis in the kindest manner, and received promise of his favour and protection.

It was a fine afternoon towards the end of November, and the tall spires of Sens, where the Pope then resided, were just visible on the horizon, that the English ambassadors journeyed onwards, in the hope that they should obtain a more favourable answer from him than they had received from the French king. The Ecclesiastics on their ambling palfreys, and the Knights on their fiery steeds, maintained such conversation as the somewhat uneasy motion and rugged road would admit.

"Of a truth," said Gilbert Foliot, "an we speed not better here than we have done hitherto, both at S. Omer and at Compeigne, little thanks will his Highness owe us, for the part we have taken herein."

"And little chance, holy Father," answered De Tracy, "would thine be of the pall thou now seekest to wrest from Becket."

"How meanest thou by that?" asked the Bishop angrily. "GOD be my witness, I never raised thought so high: for so great a burden would be far above my strength. Here is our brother, Hilary of Chichester, who of his marvellous learning and eloquence is well meet to be raised to that dignity and preeminence."

"Nay brother," said Hilary, "some small parts we have been thought to possess, and it hath been said that we have improved them by continual study: and whatever they be, we shall not be slack to use them when we do appear before his Holiness. But

yet little meet we were for such reward as our holy brother of London speaketh of."

"For our own part," continued Gilbert, "it hath ever been known and noted of us, that we have avoided, as much as in us lay, such dignities as we have been called to undergo; and all men may hereby judge how far we should be from seeking further burdens of the same kind."

"Then art thou grievously belied," said De Tracy, "concerning thy translation, holy Father, from Hereford; which men say was not——"

"Silence, Sir William de Tracy!" cried Leicester, unwilling to allow the seeds of discord to be sown among those whom it so much concerned to be unanimous, and to have the most cordially good understanding. "The time, methinks, were better spent in devising how to meet the trial whereunto we be approaching, than in ripping up old grievances, to our small pleasure, and smaller profit."

"Your wisdom, lord Earl," said Hilary, "needeth not to spend itself touching that matter; for I have that which shall move the Pope to listen graciously unto us. For it is pertinently noted of S. Ambrose, *Eloquentia maximam in se vim habet, ad pellicendos hominum animos:* which, in our vernacular, signifieth that eloquence doth marvellously allure and draw unto itself the passions of men. And we have accordingly spent no small time and labour in composing an oration fitted to the place and time, which, with our Lady's grace and your good leave, we shall deliver before him."

"By my troth," said Hugh de Morville, "I never yet, saving your presence, holy Father, did see the good that arose from orations and abundance of words. Better, in my opinion, to tell his Holiness that this Thomas hath transgressed all the laws and usages of this land, and is a spotted and perjured traitor; and that if our Lord and Master cannot at his hand obtain deposition of the Primate, why, he will even depose him for himself."

"God forbid, my lords," said the Bishop of London. "What were this but to abjure the rock of S. Peter, upon which, as on an immoveable foundation and corner-stone, the whole Church standeth? Let us rather do, as our brother of Chichester adviseth; and we doubt not that Christ's Vicar will attend graciously unto our humble and reasonable petitions."

"The Bishops do counsel well," remarked the Earl. "Thou must remember, Sir Hugh, that we be not now in the tilt-yard or in the battle-field; but come as men of peace, and must thereby accordingly compose ourselves."

"Peace or war," said De Tracy, "it is due time, so that that traitor payeth the penalty he deserveth. Lo you! here be two monks bound on the same journey with ourselves: let us of them enquire how much further this same city lieth; for your steed, my Lord of London, which appeareth to me something of the weakest, will hardly hold you out much longer."

"Marry, and he seemeth to me step uneasily," answered Foliot. "*Benedicite!* fair sons: can ye do us to wit how far we be from Sens?"

"Thither, holy Father," said Warel, "we be pilgrims ourselves; but, as we guess, from the brow of the hill we do now climb we shall behold the city."

"Maketh his Holiness sojourn there still?" asked the Earl of Leicester.

"Of a certain, fair Sir, he doth; and there be many Cardinals and Bishops there attendant upon him."

"Be you of this country, my son?" enquired the Bishop of London.

"Of Normandy, holy Father," returned Warel.

"Hear you any news of that banished traitor and sower of sedition, Thomas Becket?" interrogated De Tracy.

"None for certain, fair Sir, save that he bestoweth himself, men say, in this land."

"Know you," asked the Bishop of London, "whether he hath sent any ambassadors on his part to his Holiness the Pope?"

"There be none yet arrived at Sens," replied Warel.

By this time they reached the top of the hill; and glowing in a misty flood of purple glory, the city, towers, monasteries, castle, and bridge lay at their feet. And the vista of the leafless elms which skirted the road thither, nobly ended in such a goal.

"By my troth," exclaimed Hilary, "that which

they say of the Bishop of Banchor meseemeth true of him who holdeth this See: he needeth no other translation save to heaven."

"To which blessed place GOD vouchsafe to bring us all!" ejaculated Foliot.

"Wilt please your lordships ride?" asked Leicester. "Day weareth, and meet it were that we present our credentials unto his Holiness this evening."

They rode forward: and then Warel said to Hubert, "Let us follow their example, good brother: and doubt not, that if the Court of France did us so much right, much more shall a higher court than that of any earthly prince."

"Amen," said Hubert; "I am full of confidence and hope. Our holy Father Thomas even now prayeth for us; he is with us in spirit, and we will prove ourselves, as beseemeth, fit messengers of so high a cause."

There was high feasting that evening in the Governour's hall at Sens: and amidst pomp and pageantry Henry's ambassadors quaffed the Malvoisie, and drained the huge silver goblets. Even at the hour when their mirth was highest, and their revelry loudest, two monks might have been seen gliding along the narrow passages of the castle, preceded by a seneschal bearing a torch, and ushering them into the private room of the Pope.

Alexander the Third, who then filled the chair of S. Peter, was a man, in whose grey hairs and high

forehead, and cold blue eye, and thin pale face, might well be read his dignity. In company with a Cardinal and his private Secretary, he sat in a small room of our Lady's turret in the castle of Sens, engaged in deep conversation on the miserably divided state of Christendom, when the legates from Archbishop Becket were announced. Hastening forwards, they threw themselves at the feet of Alexander; and Hubert said:

"Holy Father, your son Joseph no longer reigneth in Egypt: but the Egyptians have risen against him, and have sold him for a slave."

"Liveth then your master?" replied the Pope. "He may claim the glory of a martyr, though he be in the flesh." And he burst into tears.

Warel then described the sufferings and dangers and protracted wanderings of the persecuted Archbishop; and concluded by beseeching that the earthly Head of the Church would not disregard one of her members, who had so nobly suffered for her welfare.

"Rest assured," returned Alexander, "that we will never forget those miracles of patience which your Master hath performed. To a Mightier than ourselves, and to a better world than this, must we leave his reward: but of this be certain, that we will execute due vengeance upon those his enemies, unless with all speed they do turn and submit themselves unto him. We bear not the keys of S. Peter in vain; and we will bind them on earth, that they

may be bound in heaven. To-morrow we give audience unto the ambassadors of the King: yourselves shall, if you so please, hear, and so with the greater verity report unto your Master what shall then be said. Meanwhile, tarry in our own abode; and remain certain of the love we bear to your Lord."

Relying on these assurances, the two monks were well contented on the following day to be spectators: and the scene was worthy of the occasion. In the great castle-hall, high and vaulted with stone, with its deep window recesses and large chimney, sat Pope Alexander in his rich episcopal robes; the triple mitre on his head, and the triple crosier held by one of his bishops. Over him was a rich hanging of gold and purple: the carved chair in which he sat rested on a raised dais: and around him stood Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops, in their most gorgeous and costly array. In a gallery at one end stood some of the wealthiest citizens and most noted ecclesiastics of the city, and among them Warel and Hubert found a convenient position.

Then, in due order, coped bishops and mailed knights were ushered into the presence; and all made the lowest obeisance as they came before him, from whom there was no earthly appeal. Alexander but slightly noticed their acknowledgements; but, when they stood in order, motioned to

Gilbert de Foliot, who was placed foremost, to speak.

"Most holy Father," said he in Latin, "and you, holy Fathers, in whose presence I stand, it is not without fear and trembling that I approach your venerable judgment-seat. But when I remember for whom I come, for a prince whose love to Holy Church hath no equal among crowned heads; and against whom, a stirrer-up of sedition, a perjured man and a traitor——"

"My son," interrupted the Pope, "to such words we may not listen. We will pray you peace."

Gilbert de Foliot stepped back in consternation, leaving his place to Hilary. The knights, who comprehended little of what had happened, but saw from Alexander's countenance that he was deeply offended, looked at each other in astonishment.

"Marry," said Leicester to Morville, "an this be our churchman's speed, we are badly sped."

"And, I fear me," replied the other, "he of Chichester will advantage us little. Look how he pranketh himself to speak!"

Hilary did indeed advance with great confidence; for his oration had cost him many a weary hour, and he flattered himself that it would greatly advantage his party.

"Sanctissime et Beatissime Pater, vosque, reve-

rendi admodum Patres, nos quidem, indignissimos regis Angliæ ministros, oportuebat——"

The bishops who surrounded the Papal chair, and who were many of them deeply learned, and all fully aware of the solecism which Hilary had uttered, burst into a laugh; and Alexander himself said to the Cardinal who stood next to him,

"Marvellous great lack of learning must these English have, when these be the Prelates whom they choose to such an embassage. *Oportuebat* indeed! An a clerk had the virtue of an angel, and no better learning than this, Prelate he were none for us."

Hilary stepped back in as great confusion as his brother of London had done, to the still greater surprise of the knights, who could not imagine what, in an address commenced with such gravity, could have excited the ridicule of the auditors.

"An it cometh to thee, Lord Earl, to speak," said Hugh de Morville, "our Lady speed thee better than our holy Fathers here!"

"Marry, and I fear it must be my lot," returned the Earl of Leicester. And perceiving that neither of the Prelates in question were disposed to recommence their addresses, he stepped forward, and said reverently enough, but with a blunt kind of grace, in Norman French,

"Most holy Father, seeing these holy Prelates have, I wot not how, been so unhappy as not to

find favour in your eyes, much do I fear me, lest I, who am no clerk, and not skilled either to speak or to understand the Latin tongue, should fare yet worse. Nevertheless, my master's honour so requiring, I will essay, in few words, to set forth the cause which hath brought us before your Holiness at this present time. It is not unknown to your Holiness that the King, my master, did of late, for the reducing of his kingdom to the better order, devise certain constitutions, to which he required all his Peers, as well temporal as spiritual, to make oath that they would obey. With others came Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury to Clarendon, where the council of the nation was assembled; and in manner prescribed made oath that he would steadfastly keep and be governed by the same. Nevertheless, shortly afterwards he changed his mind, and did utterly abjure what he had then done; and being summoned before our Lord the King, refused to appear; and being charged at Northampton to give account of certain money he had received of the King while he was Chancellor, refused to obey, saying, that when he was made Primate, from all such worldly cares was he made free; and being charged not to go out of England, he, nevertheless, secretly departed by night. Which things considered, our Lord and Master judgeth it most meet by our mouths to beseech with all humility your Holiness, to whom be put in trust the keys of

S. Peter, that you will be pleased to put out of his See, and all its dignities and possessions, the aforesaid Thomas; and our Lord will be well content that your Holiness shall, of your own free will, appoint unto him a successor in that office."

So saying, the Earl of Leicester stepped back among his friends.

"O' my word," said Sir Hugh de Morville, "your Lordship hath spoken marvellous well, and passing the Bishops exceedingly. Our Lady move his Holiness to regard our cause graciously!"

"My son," said Alexander, "little justice there were in judging a matter until the accused as well as the accusers be present. Wherefore, notwithstanding the great love we bear unto your Master, we must perforce suspend our decree, till our son of Canterbury, whom we no less love, shall have answered for himself to all those your weighty charges and allegations."

"Most holy Father," returned the Earl, "we were expressly commanded by the King our Lord, that we should obtain for him a definitive answer, or tarry for none; therefore, we pray your Holiness to judge the cause betwixt us and the Archbishop at once."

"My son," returned the Pope, "reason willeth that we should tarry for the Primate. The chair of S. Peter hath ever distributed justice with equal balance; and we may not, to agrace an earthly

monarch, do violence unto one that is the minister of a Greater than he."

To this decision, in spite of the repeated solicitations of the English ambassadors, the Pope resolutely adhered, and they were in consequence obliged to return home with an unfavourable account of their long and wearisome journey.

BOOK II.

S. Thomas a Martyr.

IMMOLATI VIR BEATUS
AGNI CARNE SAGINATUS,
ET PRÆSENTI ROBORATUS
AD CERTAMEN NUMINE,
QUAM SERMONE PRÆDICAVIT,
MILLE SIGNIS QUAM PROBAVIT,
HANC FIRMARE FESTINAVIT
FUSO FIDEM SANGUINE.
PRODIT MARTYR CONFLICTURUS,
SUB SECURI STAT SECURUS,
FERIT LICTOR,
SICQUE VICTOR
CONSUMMATUR GLADIO.
TAM PRÆCLARA PASSIO
REPLEAT NOS GAUDIO.

CHAPTER I.

Six years have elapsed since the struggle which we are recording between the Church and the Power of this world first commenced. And still it continues undecided. We leave it to the historian to relate its weary progress. It is on record, how, shortly after the interview related in the last chapter, Thomas of Canterbury pleaded his own cause before the Pope; how the Constitutions of Clarendon were read; how the whole assembly, as one man, declared that the cause of the Archbishop was the cause of the Church; and how the illustrious confessor took up his abode in the Cistercian Abbey of Pontigni. He also must relate, that on the return of the ambassadors the estates of the Archbishop and his followers were confiscated; that his friends and relations, to the number of four hundred, were banished; that an oath was first taken of them that they would present them-

selves before the Primate, if so be that his resolution might be moved; that the spectacle of so many sufferers produced a very contrary effect; and that the Bishops and Nobles of France execrated the tyranny of the persecutor. The historian also must relate the interview between the Kings of France and England at Gisors; the resolution of the latter to maintain, the perseverance of the Primate in refusing, the Constitutions of Clarendon; the excommunication of the Bishop of Salisbury, Richard de Lucy, Chief Justiciary, Hugh de S. Clare, Thomas Fitz-Bernard, and others, for allowing or assisting in the appropriation of the goods belonging to the Church of Canterbury; the determination of the Archbishop to excommunicate King Henry; the council called in consequence by that Prince at Chinon; the agitation and tears in which he opened it; the new embassy to the Pope; the legatine commission obtained by the Archbishop; the sudden and unfavourable turn his affairs took at the Court of Rome, in consequence of Alexander's fear lest Henry should acknowledge the antipope; the remonstrances of the King of France; the various unavailing efforts for reconciliation; Archbishop Becket's invincible firmness; the excommunication of the Bishop of London; Henry's project of crowning his son by the hands of the Archbishop of York, to the infraction of the privileges of the Church of Canterbury; Becket's fruitless opposition; and we shall take up our tale with the

return of King Henry from England, after the accomplishment of his favourite project, and in the summer of 1170.

It may well befit the infidel or the schismatical historian to call the firmness and resolution of the Primate, obstinacy and arrogance; to speak of his censures as the effect of rage, and term his prudence, cunning: true Churchmen will take another view of the matter. If ever Confessor had inducements to quit the cause to which he had pledged himself, if ever Bishop was encircled by weak friends and strong enemies, beset with ensnaring proposals and flattering words, and if ever servant of GOD by patient continuance in well-doing triumphed over all, then was Thomas of Canterbury that Bishop and Confessor. Let us not be deceived by the representations of writers like Hume, who could not, if they would, judge of such a case; let us rather hear the sufferer for himself. And take a letter written in 1166, on the receipt of one from the Bishops of his Province, filled with the bitterest taunts and accusations. Surely, if ever, the temper of the writer would now show itself. Thus it begins:

"Thomas, by the Grace of GOD, the humble servant of the Church of Canterbury, to all them that by the Grace of GOD be Bishops of the said Province (if indeed all have written to him), health: and that conduct which they have not yet shewn.

"The letter of your brotherlinesses (which yet we can hardly believe to have proceeded from your

common wisdom) we have of late unexpectedly received; the contents whereof savour rather of taunts than of comfort. And would that it had rather been sent from the study of piety, and the affection of charity, than of will-worship. For charity seeketh not that which is her own, but that which is JESUS CHRIST'S. It was the duty of your office, if it hath (as it hath) the purity of the Gospel, that if we rightly perform His duties, and ye rightly represent His Person Whose office ye have undertaken, rather ye ought to fear Him Who can cast both body and soul into hell, than him who can slay the body, and after that hath no more that he can do; rather to obey GOD than men, your Father than your sovereign: by His example Who was obedient to His Father, even unto death. Now He died for us, leaving us a pattern that we should follow His steps. Let us therefore die with Him. Let us lay down our lives, if so be that we may deliver from the yoke of slavery and the tribulation of the oppressor, the Church which He hath founded and set at liberty by His own blood: lest, if we do otherwise, we incur that reprehension in the Gospel, 'Whoso loveth his own life more than Me is not worthy of Me.' Ye ought to know right well, that the commands of the King, so long as he exhorteth to that which is just, must be obeyed; if otherwise he enjoineth, answer, We ought to obey GOD rather than man. One thing will I tell you—your forgiveness do I crave for giving utterance unto it—that I have

long time held my peace, waiting, if perchance the LORD would inspire you with strength, who turned back in the day of battle; if one only of you would ascend the breach, and oppose himself to the enemy for the house of Israel; or would even feign to join battle with them that daily blaspheme the Host of the LORD;—I kept silence, and none mounted the breach; I held my peace, and none opposed; I waited, and there was none that spake. I dissembled my sorrow; and there was none that even feigned to go down to the battle. Now I have nought left but complaints, and may well cry out, Arise, O LORD, judge Thine Own cause. Vindicate the cause of Thy Church which is rent in pieces, and lieth at the feet of her spoilers. The presumption of them that hate Thee increaseth more and more; there is none among them that doeth good, no, not one. I would, beloved brothers, that there were in you that zeal for the defence of the Church's liberty, that appeareth in those your letters of (as we think scarcely legitimate) appeal, for its confusion. But she is founded on a sure rock; whom none can overthrow, albeit they may shake her. Wherefore then seek ye to put me to shame? yea rather to shame yourselves in my attack? yea rather to confound yourselves together with me, a man who have taken on myself the whole peril, sustained so many revilings, borne so many injuries, undergone exile for the sake of you all? Expedient was it that one should be afflicted for the Church, if even so it might

be freed from slavery. Consider, I pray you, with an honest heart, this thing: ponder the matter: diligently attend what must be the end of these proceedings, so that, laying aside the majesty of the King, and the respect of persons, which God accepteth not, He Himself may cause you to understand what it is that ye are doing, and that which ye intend to do. He remove the veil from your hearts, that ye may know what ye ought to do. Tell me, he of you that knoweth, whose ox, or whose ass, or whose money have I taken since my advancement? Tell me, if I have wrongfully judged the cause of any, or by the loss of any man made a gain to myself? If the case be so, I restore it fourfold. But if in nothing I have offended, why do ye leave me to contend alone on God's behalf? Why do ye dare to oppose yourselves to yourselves in a cause than which none toucheth the Church more nearly? Do not, my brethren—do not, I pray you, as far as in you lieth, confound both yourselves and the Church of God. But turn ye, saith the Lord, unto Me, and ye shall be saved: I desire not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live. Stand with me, my brethren, in this battle; lay hold on shield and buckler, and come forth to my aid. Gird yourselves with the sword of God Most Mighty; that we may be able with one mind to resist more valiantly and courageously, as our duty calleth us, the evil-doers, and them that work iniquity, and them that seek to take away the

life of the Church, which is her liberty; and those who say, Let us take to ourselves the Houses of God in possession. Let us give all diligence therefore, lest anger come down upon us as upon negligent and idle shepherds; lest we be found dumb dogs, that cannot bark; lest it be said of us by them that pass by, From the elders of Babylon iniquity is come forth. If in very deed ye will hear me, know ye that the LORD will be with you, and with all of us, who strive by all means to attain peace, and to defend the liberty of the Church. But if otherwise, GOD judge betwixt me and you, and require the confusion of the Church at your hands; which of necessity, whether the world willeth or not, must stand firm in the word of the LORD wherein it is founded, until its hour is come that it shall depart out of this world unto the FATHER. He judge between us, in that ye have left me alone in this conflict: nor is there one of my friends who will go up with me unto this battle; nor is there one of you who so much as thinketh or sayeth, Woe to him that is alone! for who shall raise him up if he falleth? But this hope is laid up in my bosom, that he is not alone with whom the LORD is, for the LORD supporteth him with His Hand."

Such was the strain in which Archbishop Becket began his reply to the angry taunts of his cowardly Prelates. Let us see now the view which was taken of his exile by those of his friends who yet remained in their native country. Thus writes Peter Blesen-

sis, Archdeacon of Bath, to John of Salisbury, one of the Primate's most zealous friends.

"As often as I regard with diligence the common afflictions of the Anglican Church, and the exile of your Lord, Thomas of Canterbury, much consolation cometh unto me from the thought that it is for the justice of GOD and the liberty of the Church that he opposeth himself as a wall; and that from this persecution he will merit a glorious recompense. I see that ye are placed betwixt the anvil and the hammer; and that sinners continually redouble their blows upon you. But if ye fight in CHRIST and for CHRIST, He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape. And the LORD will remove the rod of the wicked from the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto wickedness. As the truth cannot lie, so shall the end of your persecutions be a beatitude interminable. Blessed, saith CHRIST, are they that suffer for righteousness' sake. Saith Peter the Apostle, Let none of you suffer as a thief or a murderer, or a busy body in other men's matters. For not the pain, but the cause, maketh the Martyr; as saith the same Apostle, But, if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye. The gift of GOD is it, and His best gift, to suffer contumely for CHRIST. To you, saith the Apostle, it is given on the behalf of CHRIST not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."

And how warmly attached to him were the friends of the Primate, let the following brief letter from Petrus Cellensis speak:

"We were right heartily consoled by the consolation of your Holiness, so full of affection, so pious, so full of sweetness and love. The HOLY GHOST the Paraclete return unto you your own consolation, because you have so pitifully looked upon our desolation. The receipt of your letters revived our heart, not indeed dead, but languishing to the death. To our lords and to our friends we return your lovingkindness and consolation; and in the hope and design of being grateful to them, we send the relics which you desired. Receive them: and since they have no place where to betake themselves, let them be safe under your protection. We commend our brothers and messengers to the discretion of your Holiness. Count yourself as our lord and brother, and fellow-sharer in the prayers of us all. Farewell."

There seems to have been a presentiment on the part of both Archbishop Becket himself, and of his followers, that his glory would not be limited by confession alone. In his letter to the English Bishops he hints at something of the kind; and the impression appears to have grown stronger and stronger, till the time of its fulfilment approached. In the view of this termination to his career, the piety and devotion of the little band, first in Pontigni, and then (when Henry II. threatened to expel

the Cistercians from his kingdom if he were any longer sheltered there,) at Sens, were the admiration of the religious of France. The Archbishop passed much of his time in private devotion; and Warel and Hubert, (who afterwards filled the Archiepiscopal Chair of Beneventum,) with John of Salisbury and his other adherents, attended diligently the Hours, officiated in the Mass, gave such tidings of consolation as the times afforded to their persecuted friends in England, and occasionally listened to and assisted in the memoirs which Hubert de Hoschan was drawing up, and which have come down to us as a faithful history of his patron. From his protracted trials the mind of the Prelate came forth like refined silver; and perchance, without losing any of the firmness, it lost some of the hastiness which had been an occasional cause of triumph to his enemies.

The six years which have elapsed since we last saw Agnes de Tracy, had affected her but little. Ranulph de Broc had long been detained in Holy Land, by various expeditions, by a long captivity, and at last by contrary winds and difficult passages. But now, having arrived in Normandy, he sent forward a squire with the intelligence of his safe return, and speedy approach to claim the hand of his mistress. In the meantime, ignorant of the events which had occurred since his departure, and having unfortunately been thrown into the company of Sir William de Tracy and Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse, he

was led to imbibe the most preposterous ideas on the subject of the Archbishop's character; and was the more confirmed in them by De Tracy's assertion that his sister held with respect to it the same views as himself. Agnes, on the other hand, had imbibed from the Prioress of S. Mary's, and from her occasional intercourse with Abbat Odo, the highest veneration and esteem for the noble-minded Primate; and neither the gentle exhortations of the Abbat, who loved her as a child, nor the sharper rebukes of her own superior, could restrain her from breaking out into expressions of passionate indignation at the confiscation of the goods of the Church of Canterbury; and at the mean contrivance whereby Henry prevented the importation of any message of excommunication from the Archbishop, by shutting up all the ports, and making it death to any who should presume to be the bearer of such a message.

Abbat Odo, except that a few more white hairs escaped from his mitre, was little altered; and Eadbald had won the affections of all the monks, and was spoken of as his successor. The church of the Abbey had been some years previously burnt down: but the Abbat and Prior, aided by the skill and wealth of the brethren, had succeeded in completing the greater part of another, which it was hoped would receive consecration at the hands of the Archbishop as soon as he should return.

And with this hasty sketch of the position of its principal characters, we recommence our tale in July, 1170.

CHAPTER II.

It was on the Feast of S. Mary Magdalene, 1170, that High Mass having been said in the Abbey of S. Giles near Fretvile, the Archbishop, Warel, and Hubert found themselves alone in the Sacristy. The Primate was disrobing: and as he did so, he addressed occasional observations to his followers.

"This is a different day, my son," said he, "from that on which we prepared to meet the King at Northampton. That was a day of sorrow and rebuke and blasphemy: then went we to plead the Church's cause as a criminal; now go we to be reconciled to her chief oppressor, and that without concession on our part: God's Name therefore be praised!"

"Of a truth, holy Father," replied Warel, "he that then went forth weeping, and bearing precious seed, hath now come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him."

"Yea," continued Hubert, "heaviness hath endured for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

"This is the LORD's doing," said Becket, solemnly, "and it is marvellous in our eyes. I thought not that GOD would have preserved me to see the day that should restore to me the friendship of my royal Lord, whom I have never ceased to love; and should give me the hopes of again offering the venerable Sacrifice in our beloved Cathedral church of Canterbury. That the confiscations should be refunded, and the banished restored, and the power of the keys given into our hands whole as we received it from GOD, seemeth to me almost beyond belief now that it is come to pass, and assuredly beyond hope before it came."

"And the season of the year both at Northampton and here, seemeth to agree with our own hearts," remarked Warel. "Then was it a dreary autumn, and a long winter was there to be gone through; now summer is at her brightest, as our joy at its highest."

"Whether it will please GOD to continue us for a long or a short time in the service of the Church," said the Primate, "we cannot tell: but this of a surety we know, that whether it be long or short, we shall never forget your love and devotion and fidelity towards us; for, in suffering all things, ye have seemed as though ye suffered nothing. And GOD's benison be on you therefore, now and for ever!"

The monks knelt as their Bishop spoke; and then kissed the jewelled hand which he extended to them. And thus the champions of the Church came forward to her victory.

With far other feelings the King's followers hailed that bright morning. Now, after all their threats of vengeance and declarations of contempt, to be forced to bend the knee to their great enemy was sorely galling to their pride; but, besides this, they knew that there was a heavy reckoning to pay. From their tents on the edge of the broad meadow, they witnessed the gathering of the vast assembly, that flocked together to the reconciliation of the King and the Archbishop. Far across it rose the white tents of the French nobility; and the pennon with the holy fleurs-de-lys marked that tenanted by the Sovereign. A certain space was railed off in the centre, and the barriers guarded by knights and yeomen. Merchants, artificers, clowns, friars, priests, and all kind of the rabble crowded round the enclosure; and galleries were erected on one side for the reception of the wives and daughters of the nobility. Sir William de Tracy and Sir Ranulph de Broc, to whom the charge of marshals had been given, rode slowly up and down the green within the barriers.

"God's malison on these clowns!" said De Tracy: "what do they here gaping on us? Did they never see a shaven priest afore? for that is all they be like to see this day: save that he shall ride with

some little more pride than ordinary; and that, our Lady knoweth, is enough."

"Nay now, sir Knight," replied Sir Ranulph, "grudge not the people their enjoyment, such as it is. Marry, an we were in luck, right willing would you be to have so many witnesses of our triumph. His to-day, ours to-morrow, quoth the proverb."

"One might think," said the other, provoked at his companion's good humour, "that thou didst enjoy this disgrace! Keep back, sirrahs!" he continued to the people who pressed on the palings.

"Can your Lordships tell me now," quoth a fool, who had found his way thither, and with his cap and bells was affording no small amusement to the people; "can your Lordships tell me now, why the elder of you is like an oyster?"

Sir William de Tracy bestowed a curse on the poor fool, and rode on; Sir Ranulph reined in his horse, and laughed as he answered, "Not I, good fool. Expound unto me, I pray you."

"Why," answered the jester, "he that hath ridden on seldom enough bestoweth his words on the like of us, till he be come unto the furnace of affliction; even as the oyster openeth not his mouth till he be put into the fire."

"Gramercy, fool!" said the Knight, throwing him a piece of money, and riding on. "Come, Sir William," he continued, "cheer up thy countenance, man! Come, laugh at what thou canst not help."

"Thou hatest not this man as I do," said the other, "or thou couldst not thus make merry with this shame."

"Marry, I hate him infinitely," replied the other; "more from thy teaching than his merits. But lo! here cometh the procession."

A burst of military music on the English side, answered by a similar flourish on the French, commanded the attention of all. A band of Barons and Knights rode forward on each side to the gates of the enclosure; which having been thrown open, from the one the King of England, from the other the Archbishop, both on horseback, advanced.

The King, now somewhat advanced in years, sat his steed with great grace, and behaved full royally. But it was the thought of the multitude that the Prelate looked even more kingly than he. The latter rode forward slowly; the former, putting spurs to his horse, galloped to meet him. The King seemed to speak first, as he took the Archbishop by the hand; and after a little conversation, in which Becket appeared to support the greater share, the latter dismounted, and would have thrown himself at his monarch's feet. But in this he was prevented by Henry, who stooped from his horse so low, as to hold the stirrup while the Prelate remounted. Then the Archbishop of Sens read the articles agreed on, in form following:

"We, Henry, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Normandy, Aquitaine,

and Anjou, do for the love of God, of his Holiness Alexander, Pope, and of the Holy Roman Church, grant our Royal leave to our well-beloved Thomas, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, and Metropolitan, to return unto his church of Canterbury, it to have and to hold together with all possessions that he held before he departed from England. He granteth the same likewise to all men that on his account were exiles."

Thus, by the patience and resolution of the Archbishop, the obnoxious institutions of Clarendon were at once and for ever abolished, and things in the English Church returned to the same course as before their promulgation. The exiles were introduced, and well received by the King: and the splendid pageant was over.

After the banquet in the royal tent had ended, and Sir Ranulph had obtained the royal licence to depart unto England, to solemnize his marriage with Agnes, Sir William de Tracy said:

"Sir Ranulph de Broc, an it standeth with your leisure, I would speak unto you, ere we depart for England, on a matter of some moment.

"I am at your service," said the other; "and with so fair a moon above us, and so fair a meadow before us, it were little hardship, methinks, to pass the night in talk."

"It is not unknown to you," proceeded Sir William, "that when the goods of the church of Canterbury were confiscated, they were granted by

his Highness, as unto many others, so more especially unto those whose lands lay adjacent to the city. Among these your uncle, Sir Robert de Broc, did, by request of the King, obtain two hides of land to be added to your domains, he therein acting as guardian of your possessions during your absence in Holy Land. For those lands he paid a price to the King, under their real worth indeed, but such as he would not willingly lose. Now, report goeth that all lands so obtained from Canterbury must now be returned; for such is the will of our new king, the Archbishop; who groundeth himself on a certain musty proverb, 'Once the Church's, always the Church's.' An this be so, either he or thou must lose this money: for to reclaim it from the King were impossible; and even to mention it unto him were a sure way to lose his royal favour. He, therefore, willeth you by me to resist the Archbishop to the uttermost; and never to yield up those lands, whensoever, or wheresoever, or by whomsoever, claimed."

"Right willing am I," said Sir Ranulph, "to yield so reasonable a promise. Something too much of this Prelate's arrogance have we had already. I marked how he did as an equal meet the King to-day; and it shall not be my fault if further reverence he hath paid him."

"Surely," returned the other, "there were small need of that; and from one of your known courage it were even less seeming than from others. He

that hath overthrown knights in the field should hardly yield to priests in the cloister."

"Marry, the land is my own," replied his friend; "it was fairly sold, and fairly bought. It were not meet that my uncle should lose the money for it paid, nor will I myself: if the Archbishop grieveth for the loss of his Church, let him make it good."

"I will no longer then detain you," observed Sir William; "we must be stirring with the lark to-morrow." Sir Ranulph de Broc passed into his tent; and he continued, "Now have I this woodcock in my snare. An he denieth this land to Becket, the proud churchman will deem little of excommunicating him; that depriveth him, for so long as the censure holdeth, of my sister's hand; and who knoweth how we may then work upon him to fall in with us this matter concerning? But yet there lacketh time to digest the purpose."

While Sir William de Tracy thus gave vent to his hatred of the Archbishop, the latter was seated with John of Salisbury, Warel, and Hubert, in the room appropriated to his use within the monastery of S. Giles. Three parchments lay on the massy oaken table; and the Archbishop set his name and episcopal seal to each in turn.

"Now, son John," he exclaimed, "these, as thou knowest, be the excommunications of our brothers of London and Salisbury, and this the deposition of Roger of York, for the marvellous ill part he played touching the coronation of the young King.

Thou mayest not delay in carrying them over into England; for it concerneth us much that they be published with the utmost convenient speed. We do live in dread that some accident, of us unforeseen, should prevent their so necessary effect; for which cause we will not tarry for them till we be able to cross ourselves. They will be published in our Cathedral church of Canterbury by the Abbat of S. Augustine's and thyself, as soon after thy arrival in England as may well be. And our will is, that thou dost at the same time notify to all men concerned therein, that within a month thenceafter ensuing, thou wilt, acting under our authority (unless we in our person should before that time be present), further excommunicate all such as shall have any lands, goods, chattels, or appurtenances whatsoever, of our aforesaid Cathedral church, unless he or they, the said offenders, shall first, by application personally made, pray for a delay of the sentence, promising that they will, with the most speed that in them lieth, restore the said sacrilegiously acquired spoil. And here is a writ, of that tenor, subscribed with our name, and sealed with our seal, the names only being left blank, to be published by the Abbat and thyself, as aforesaid, at the expiration of the said time."

"Of a surety, holy Father," replied John of Salisbury, "your commands shall be performed. But might it not be well (and I pray your Fatherliness's forgiveness if I herein err), that some delay

or leniency were used in this matter? Many strong enemies hath your Holiness in England; few friends, and they weak; and much danger may there accrue, not only to yourself (for that your Fatherliness regardeth not), but also to the Church, if matters be overturned."

"My son," answered Archbishop Becket, "it hath never been our use to look at that which worldly and carnal men might deem profitable and expedient to the Church: through this we have ever passed, and considered what in itself was just and right. And so we shall do now. It is fitting that these men, who have become tools unto the civil power, being like machines in its hands, and forgetting their high calling and their most sacred office, have stooped to render, indeed, the things that are Cæsar's unto Cæsar, but to refuse unto GOD, through fear of Cæsar, the things that be GOD'S: it is fitting, we say, that such men, who cannot be led by love, but must be driven by fear, should feel the temporal power of the Church, whose spiritual authority they have so contemned."

"Yet were there, holy Father, one more thought which I would willingly urge on your Fatherliness, if I might have permission so to do."

"We give thee leave, my son," said the Primate: "speak boldly."

"I fear then lest your Holiness should herein give great occasion unto the Church's enemies to blaspheme: I know how they will say that such

haste proceedeth not of your pastoral care for the Church committed unto your charge, as we, who know your Fatherliness, know also that it doth; but is the effect of revenge, and springeth of ungoverned passion."

"Nay," answered Becket," an they say so, the sin of their false judgment resteth on their head: we are guiltless. For us, it is a very small thing that we should be judged of men: the rather that the time of our departure draweth so nigh."

The monks looked one on another, as if to make certain whether they had heard the last words aright: at last Warel asked—

"How meaneth your Holiness? Your departure unto England?"

"To a better place, we trust, than England," replied the Confessor; "and be not surprised at this saying. For these four years past it hath been a presentiment that I should be accounted worthy of the crown of martyrdom. At the first, I dared not to yield myself unto so bright a hope; for I remembered that my grievous sin at Clarendon, and was troubled. But both in dreams of the night, and thoughts of the day, it hath visited me and dwelt with me: but never so strongly as this morning afore I met the King; and what did then happen was, as it were, a sure and a near presage of its truth."

"I understand not," said Hubert, "what it is that your Holiness pointeth at."

"All other things," said Becket, "were well ordered and carried betwixt us; but the kiss of peace he constantly refused to give; thereby shewing the hollowness of all. And that on so poor an excuse!"

"What excuse then alleged he, holy Father?" asked Warel.

"He said, that in his own kingdom he would bestow it right willingly; but that here in France less convenient were it. And now, my sons, what mean ye to weep and to break my heart? What so glorious an end, an ye of a truth love me, could ye wish for your master? What so everlasting a memory in the Church? Lo! here we have suffered miseries compared unto which death were happiness; and why should ye who have borne the greater evil tremble at the lesser? In the mean time we commend ourselves unto your hearty prayers."

With such words the Primate endeavoured to inspirit his followers. And when they left him to pass the night in tears, he sank into a sleep as easy as that of an infant.

CHAPTER III.

"And now, mine own Agnes," said Sir Ranulph de Broc, as, some six weeks after the date of the last conversation, he strolled with her in the *pleasance* of Sir Robert de Aymer, a brother-in-arms of her father, at whose castle she was making her abode previously to her marriage, "there cometh but one more sunset between me and mine happiness. How slowly he seemeth to go down behind those elms and the tall tower of the cathedral in the distance, as though he lingered his longest this fair evening over the earth."

"In sooth," said Agnes, "to me he seemeth to sink faster than when you were yet in Holy Land. How often have I shaped me out of those golden clouds that hover around his path, the Holy City with her golden domes and minarets, and the City of David, and the Mount of Olives, and the Holy Sepulchre, and the Pool of Siloam. And I

have wept for very desire that I could take unto me a dove's wings, and worship on that blessed hill, whereon our Atonement was made. And ere my fancies have resolved themselves into air, the moon hath come out, and the cold wind hath arisen, and instead of the vines and olives of that fair region, there was the refectory looking down on me with its cold eyes, and the church that in the uncertain light seemed even more solemn than by day."

"And thinkest thou not, my Agnes, that from my prison on Mount Lebanon, I too did watch all the sweet changes of nature, so far as they might be visible unto me in my grated cell. I know indeed that wise men tell us that the sun, when he riseth here in England, is at Holy Land in bright mid-day: the which, however, I something misdoubt; since else some change in the time of his rising and setting we must have seen as we sailed thither. But such neither saw we ourselves, neither can I hear of any that did at any time see it. But how that matter be soever, it was my wont to picture to myself in the burning noondays there, such walk and such converse in the pleasant evening as this; and now that it is come, what happiness did ever equal mine?"

"There is but one thing, Ranulph, that throweth any cloud over the future. It toucheth that land whereof you have told me, which hath come to you from the confiscations at Canterbury."

"Nay now, my fair Agnes, trouble not yourself

with so very a trifle. That land is my own; and if the proud Prelate thinketh to frighten me to surrender it up unto him, he deceiveth himself mightily, and his followers."

"An you knew the proud Prelate, as you term him, you would learn that pride for himself hath he none. His care is for the Church: he dareth not to leave her poorer than he received her, knowing that her wealth will be required at his hands. To her was he wedded when the episcopal ring was put on his finger: to her he hath sworn to be faithful. What wouldst thou think of thyself, Ranulph, an I were thine, as I shortly shall be, if thou wert to impoverish my estates and give away my broad lands, and leave me in want? And how much heavier therefore is his sin, who having the heavenly Bride given into his charge, leaveth her forlorn, and yieldeth her up unto her enemies?"

"Nay, an the case were so," said Sir Ranulph de Broc, "marvellous great injustice have I done this man. But thou deceivest thyself, Agnes, thou deceivest thyself. I myself have seen his arrogance, when at Fretvile he came forwards to meet our gracious Lord as if he owned not any peer upon earth."

"I marvel," said Agnes in return, "that thou dost not see how much of thine own chivalry there is in his nature. When thou didst at the passage-of-arms at Sens keep the field against all comers in honour of thy lady-love, who charged thee then

with pride and insolence in so setting forth thine own prowess? Nay, an thou hadst been overthrown (as our Lady be praised thou wert not), who, thinkest thou, would have thrown thy pride in thy teeth? If this thou didst for an earthly glory and an earthly love, how much the rather may he that hath his eye fixed on heavenly renown, and his heart set on a love that shall last for ever, come forward in the championship of the truth unabashed and unterrified? and, knowing that the mightiest kings are but as dust in the balance in His sight Whom he serveth, come before them as befitteth the minister of Him that is the King of kings and Lord of lords?"

"Thou wilt make me, mine Agnes, to love this man in despite of mine own self. But of a surety he hoardeth up money; and they say he hath already untold heaps of treasure; and what noble mind ever hoarded up miserable pelf, which is made to be consumed?"

"Assuredly," returned Agnes, "he hath laid up great treasures; and he addeth unto them daily. But what be they? The benisons of widows, and the thanksgivings of orphans, and the joy of the oppressed, and the smiles of galley-slaves; them he comforteth, and nurtureth, and freeth, and redeemeth continually. And where layeth he them up? Where moth consumeth not, and thief corrupteth not, and where his heart is, in heaven. Dost thou envy him that treasure? His enemies

well speak of his riches; for who is there among them that hath amassed the like?"

"But thy brother," persisted Sir Ranulph, "giveth me a far different account of him; and of a verity he ought to know the truth herein."

"Receive him as a brother, not as a guide," said Agnes. "This I have told thee before. Nothing of the Archbishop Becket have I spoken, but what I do from my heart know to be true; judge then, therefore, how the case standeth."

"On my word thou speakest well, Agnes," said the knight. "As I am belted knight, I will restore those lands free and at once. Before I sleep I will give orders in this matter."

"Now our Lady be praised!" returned Agnes. "Thou hast by these few words, my Ranulph, removed much grief from my mind."

"Here cometh thy brother," remarked Sir Ranulph; "and, as it seemeth to me, in some haste."

"Well be met, fair sister!" cried Sir William de Tracy. "I would not for much wealth have broken in on your leisure, were it not that I have tidings of much import to you, Sir Ranulph; and I fear me their tenour will be unpleasing unto both of you."

"What be they, Sir William?" asked the knight. "God send they concern not to-morrow!"

"That as may be," replied the other. "But the news reacheth thus far. For those said lands which you refused to surrender up (and that on just

grounds in my poor opinion) to the church of Canterbury, Odo of S. Augustine, and another monk, acting in the name and on the behalf of the Archbishop, have this morning, amongst divers others, excommunicated you also."

Sir Ranulph de Broc stood as one thunderstruck. Agnes turned very pale, but left go of the arm she had hitherto held. That motion roused the knight.

"Agnes," he said, "wilt thou fly from me as a polluted man? Wilt thou join thyself with this arrogant man against him that is thy betrothed husband? Nay, Agnes," he continued, striving again to take her hand, "he severeth not so; it needeth stronger steel than such to cut asunder such cords of love as ours. Or is it," he said bitterly, "that thou too art like the rest of womankind, false and heartless, and glad of an occasion like this to withdraw from me the heart and troth thou didst once plight me? If so it be, tell me so fairly; and choose not such false and shuffling means of breaking a heart that hath ever been wholly thine."

"Ranulph," said Agnes, bursting into tears, "I know not whether I should more weep for thee or for myself. For thee, that thou canst so requite her that hath loved thee so tenderly; or for me, that I should stand betrothed to one that is under the ban of the Church!"

"Forgive me, fair Agnes," returned the knight; "I scarce know what to say or to do. To have the

cup of bliss dashed from my lips, and when I thought to have instantly quaffed it, and by a hand that I had just forgiven!"

"*Forgiven*, Sir Ranulph!" said Agnes; "and what hadst thou to forgive? Thou committest an injury, and talkest of forgiving the injured, and then again ragest at him because he defendeth himself. Thou knowest not what to do? I will tell thee then: take horse upon the instant, and ride to Canterbury, and give up those lands, and if a penance of more be laid on thee give more, and obtain absolution. Shame on thee, that so poor an argument as my love should weigh with thee, when higher respects touch thee not! But an it be so, that thou lovest me as thou sayest, do this with speed; for, as my word was never yet broken, see thee and speak to thee again I will not till thou hast made thy peace with Holy Church."

She turned towards the castle as she spoke; and such was the decision of her manner, that Sir Ranulph dared not follow her. From a storm of conflicting emotions, in which pride, and love, and rage, and awe, strove for the mastery, he was roused by the voice of Sir William de Tracy.

"Come, Sir Ranulph!" he said, "this child's game suiteth boys and girls indifferent well, but is much unmeet for men, and those men belted knights. What meaneth that which even now you spake concerning your forgiveness of Becket?"

"Sir William," said Ranulph, "in love thou

hast never been, or thou wouldst not so trifle with me now."

"In love!" said De Tracy; "aye, marry, and out of it, a thousand times; and therefore do I best know its treatment. But I pray thee to answer me: thou surely hast not thought of making peace with Becket?"

"Marry, and I had promised that I would do so with all convenient speed; but whether this his fury holdeth me not from that promise absolved, I know not yet."

"Aye, an thou hadst promised twenty thousand times!" cried Sir William. "How canst thou yield thyself thus tamely to be overridden by a peevish girl, who knoweth not wrong from right?"

"But thou knowest her not as I do," pursued Sir Ranulph, "or thou wouldst know that to persist as I now am, were to cut me off from all hope of calling her my wife."

"I know the wiles and deceits of women better than thou dost," replied his friend. "Take my word for it, she will send for thee ere long, and love thee all the more for thy spirit in refusing her."

"Nathless," returned Ranulph, "I am even now minded to follow that which she desireth, and make my submission with the best grace I can: the rather that something within my breast telleth me she adviseth right."

"Nay then, have thine own way!" said the other. "Ride in all haste to Canterbury: tarry all

night without the Abbey of S. Augustine; crouch to the ground before Odo's feet when he cometh forth on the morrow; give up those lands; and if he asketh for Saltwood, give up that fair manor too; kneel, and beg, and weep, and lament before him; and perchance, in due season, when thou art abased low enough to satiate his pride, he will condescend to shrive thee! After this thou mayest be my sister's husband, but never more be brother of mine!"

"What then, in S. George's name," asked Ranulph somewhat angrily, "wouldst thou have me to do?"

"This would I have thee to do," said De Tracy gravely, and quitting entirely his previously sarcastic tone. "Tarry a space till our lord cometh over from Normandy. Thither will I, to tell him of this new insolence of Becket's. He will not ever bear to be insulted and trampled on; good sparkles of his Plantagenet courage he hath already made manifest; and there needeth but this to blow it into a blaze. Rest assured he will not overlook the sufferings of his friends here, among whom thou holdest a chief place; but will revenge them with what speed he may."

"Of a surety," reasoned De Broc, "there were no harm in tarrying for a while. Peradventure, the censure may be taken off me without my yielding, if I have but the patience to wait for a time sufficient."

"And consider," pursued Sir William, "that thou wilt be betraying me, and thy other friends in France, if while we be pleading thy cause thou art deserting it. Ill will it stand with thine honour, if, when a mandate hath been wrested from the Archbishop for the removal of this censure, thou still retaining thine own, the messenger that beareth it hither shall find it no longer thine. Thus wouldst thou make thy friends fools, and thyself something worse."

"Of a surety I will take no further steps herein," said De Broc, "till I hear further from thee."

"As doubt not thou shalt, and that very presently," answered the other. "But where wilt thou the meanwhile bestow thyself?"

"An I hold this night for Saltwood," replied Ranulph; "wilt thou bear me company?"

"Marry, and very willingly," he answered. "Only I will first say a word to my sister; and will meet thee at the postern presently."

Thus they parted: Sir Ranulph to make preparations for his journey; and Sir William to acquaint his sister with her lover's determination of still defying the utmost censures of the Church.

CHAPTER IV.

The weary six years of the Archbishop's exile were now over. The sun rose in unclouded splendour on the Feast of S. Andrew; the wind set fair for England; and the waves, as the Archbishop and Warel looked at them from the window of the little convent in which they had passed the last night of their banishment, rippled gaily on the beach, as if promising a gentle escort across the channel. The bark was at anchor in the bay; and her mariners eagerly awaited their summons. The simple morning meal was over, when the Primate addressed Warel.

"Men think us happy this day, my son, in that we have made, by the blessing of God, all opposition bow before us, and are about, after all our wanderings, to return unto the land that we love. Well do we know, on the contrary part, what toils and tribulations await us there. Every day hear we

that our messengers be injured and insulted, our messages disobeyed, our censures slighted, and we ourselves set at nought and threatened. Nevertheless, having been so often delivered aforetime, we will not doubt that even in these perils we shall also be upheld."

"Nevertheless, holy Father, they be not of that nature that we can shut our eyes unto them; and none can lay it unto your Holiness's charge that you have not taken all measures of forethought whereby they may be averted."

"True, my son: it were a tempting of GOD to pray unto Him for preservation without using the means necessary thereunto. It were like unto the captain who should put forth with a leak in his vessel, and then cry out and pray for preservation."

"I trust me," said Warel, "that He will so hear your Fatherliness's prayers, that, by the intercession of those glorious defenders of the same Church, S. Alphege and Blessed Anselm, the evil that we fear may be averted, and the good furthered and promoted."

"Amen!" replied Becket. "To which end, descend we to the chapel, where the brethren even now wait for us, to offer up our supplications as the Church hath in this case taught us."

The twelve brethren of the foundation and its Prior having taken their places with Warel, and the Archbishop seating himself by the Altar, *Benedictus*

was sung; and then, *Kyrie Eleison* and *Pater Noster* having been said, he continued—"Give, O LORD, Thy Salvation unto Thy servants." "Who do put," chanted the Choir, "their trust in Thee." "Send them help from the Sanctuary." "And strengthen them out of Sion." "Be unto them," prayed the Bishop, "a Tower of Strength." "From the face," replied the Brethren, "of their enemy." "Let the enemy," he proceeded, "have no advantage over them, nor the son of violence approach to hurt them." "Praised be the LORD daily." "Even the GOD That helpeth us," they responded, "and That poureth His benefits upon us." "Shew us Thy ways, O LORD!" "And teach us Thy paths!" "Oh, that our ways were made so direct." "That they might," replied the Chorus, "keep Thy commandments." "The crooked shall be made straight." "The rough places plain." "O LORD," concluded the Archbishop, "hear our prayer!" "And let our cry," answered the others, "come unto Thee!"

"The LORD be with you."

"*And with thy spirit.*"

"Let us pray. GOD, Which leddest Thy people Israel dryshod through the midst of the Red Sea, and by the guiding of a star didst conduct the wise men unto Bethlehem, grant us, we pray Thee, a prosperous journey and a quiet season, that, Thy holy Angel being our companion, we may attain unto that place whither we journey, and finally may

enter into the port of everlasting felicity, through Christ our LORD.

"O GOD, Who broughtest Thy servant Abraham from Ur of the Chaldæans, and didst protect him through all the way in which he went, and among all the people through whom he passed; be unto us, we pray Thee, in our preparation a Support, in our journey a Solace, in the heat a Shadow, in the storm a Covering, in weariness a Consolation, in rough places a Staff, in shipwreck a Port; that so we may by Thy guidance return in peace unto our own homes.

"Assist us mercifully, O LORD, in these our supplications and prayers, and dispose the way of Thy servants towards the attainment of everlasting salvation; that among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, they may ever be defended by Thy most gracious and ready help.

"Grant to us, we pray Thee, Almighty GOD, that this Thy Family may walk in the way of Salvation, and following the example of blessed John, Thy forerunner, may finally attain to that place whereof he taught, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD, Who with Thee and the HOLY GHOST, liveth and reigneth, One GOD, world without end. Amen.

"Let us set forth," he continued, "in peace."

"In the name of the LORD," chanted the Choir. "Amen."

In half-an-hour, the vessel that bore the Arch-

bishop to his home, was bounding towards England. Let us leave her to pursue her easy voyage, and to land him on the following day at Sandwich; while we remain in France, to trace the schemes of his enemies.

Sir William de Tracy had used all his influence with the King to induce him, if possible, to compel Becket to free those from his anathema who persisted in their sacrilege. But Henry, though sorely chafed at this new proof of the Primate's firmness, was not willing to engage in a dispute where the right so evidently lay on his adversary's side; though at the same time he made no scruple of declaring that the firmness of those who retained the possessions of the church of Canterbury was by no means unpleasant to him. De Tracy, in writing to his friend Sir Ranulph de Broc, used every effort to excite him to perseverance: he represented that the Primate was odious to nearly all the Barons; that the two excommunicated Bishops had a strong party in their favour; that the high hand with which Church censures were carried would disgust many who had been previously partizans of Archbishop Becket; that the King's cause would finally prevail; and that a little firmness would enable him to retain that for which he had already suffered so much. It was not De Tracy's hatred to the Archbishop alone that induced him to bestow so much pains in keeping back these manors; he wished to support his own character, which was none of the best, by the

co-operation of one which stood so high as did that of Sir Ranulph de Broc ; and to do this, he wished to engage the latter in an implacable feud with the Archbishop. Agnes, meanwhile, had returned to the Nunnery of S. Mary, and there, in sorrow and trembling, awaited the issue; fully determined that she would never give herself to Sir Ranulph, till he had made full and free reparation to the Church.

De Tracy, who had long borne the most mortal hatred to the Archbishop, from having been, some years previously to the commencement of our tale, excommunicated by him for some unjust dealing, and not restored till he had made due amends, had determined, from the time of the Primate's disgrace, to take on him the fullest and most ample revenge. After sounding several of those who were most rancorous against him, he at length darkly hinted to Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse, a man almost as abandoned as himself, only as much his superior in brute courage as his inferior in cunning, that the death of the Primate would be the only means by which the difficult and tedious dispute would be settled. He further asserted, that though the King could not but express his horror of the deed before it were committed, nothing could in fact be more grateful to him when once performed; and to prove this, he strung together the many expressions of anger into which at various times he had burst, when mentioning the Archbishop's name. Fitz-Urse, as soon as there was any prospect of reward, willingly lent himself to

the scheme; and having mentioned Sir Richard de Brito as one likely to join in it, he was accordingly admitted into the plot; and the co-operation of Sir Hugh de Morville, to a certain extent (how far, the course of our tale will shew), was secured. The names of the conspirators are curiously introduced in an *allegorical, moral, and historical* poem, composed by a contemporary author on the Death of the Martyr:

> Tres sunt: Mortis villicus, Thrax, et Urso natus;
> Ut sit tetras, tribus est Brito sociatus:
> Paria rebus nomina facit hic reatus;
> Truces et mortiferos, brutos, ursi status.

It was agreed between the three principal workers of this deed of darkness, that the first violent action on the part of their great enemy, or the first expression of anger from the King which could by any possibility be construed to an approval of their design, should be his death-warrant.

So stood matters for the present. In the meanwhile the Primate had arrived in England, and had landed in the very port of Sandwich, whence, six years and three weeks before, he had sailed to his exile. On his first landing he was exposed to much danger from the shouts and threats of the rabble, who demanded with loud cries the restoration of the excommunicated Bishops; and he was indebted to the friendly interference of his old enemy, John of Oxford, for his escape. That same night he reached Canterbury. The monks of S. Augustine's,

with Abbat Odo at their head, went forth chanting the *Confitemini Domino*, the cxviiith Psalm, telling how it is better to trust in the LORD than to put any confidence in man; better to trust in the LORD than to put any confidence in princes; how the Right Hand of the LORD doeth valiantly, the Right Hand of the LORD bringeth mighty things to pass; how the stone which the builders refused was become the Headstone of the corner; how it was the LORD's doing, and marvellous in their eyes. "Help," they continued, "O LORD! O LORD, send us now prosperity! Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the LORD: we have wished you good luck, ye that are of the House of LORD!" And Canterbury poured out her citizens by thousands, to welcome in her Prelate. Mayor and aldermen in their robes of office, yeomen and merchants, mechanics and handicraftsmen, free and bond, serf and noble, Saxon and Norman, vied to do homage to the constancy and the victory of the returning Confessor. Fair faces and bright eyes lined the narrow windows; the bells from S. Mary in the Castle, and S. George the Martyr, and S. Dunstan, and S. Alphege, pealed continuously; above the rest, S. Ethelbert's Tower and S. Augustine's Cathedral thundered their welcome; rushes, and such winter flowers as the season afforded, willingly offered from the land of the knight and the garden of the peasant, strewed the way. Thus, with triumph and rejoicings, went Thomas of Canterbury on the way that he was never to return.

It was remarked by his near friends, more especially by Warel, that though an occasional flush passed over it, the Primate's face was unusually pale; and though he courteously acknowledged the salutations of the people, he did it with a grave sadness of manner very unlike his usual life and energy. They who had remained in England thought and said it, how much his exile had changed him: the friends who had suffered with him knew that some deeper cause was at work.

That night, in his private chapel, the Primate ordered that the penitential Psalms should be chanted; and its roof echoed with the *O Luce Qui mutatibus;* which we will thus venture to translate:

FATHER of Glory, That dost dwell
In splendour inaccessible;
Upon the Brightness of Whose Rays
The veilèd Seraph fears to gaze:

Thick is the mist, the night is drear
That shrouds us as we sojourn here:
But soon a light, that fadeth never,
Shall chase away our shade for ever.

That Light, whose radiance passeth far
The glory of the noontide star,
That Light hath GOD laid up for them
That wear His Royal Diadem.

It lingereth yet! Why thus delay
Thy wish'd-for hours, celestial day?
Ere we can reach that Heavenly Hall
Our earthly tenement must fall.

But when, O GOD, the spirit, free
From these its chains, shall haste to Thee,
Then shall it see Thee, then adore,
Then shall it love Thee evermore.

Grant that our life's fast fading ray
May usher in eternal day,
That we may find a Home with Thee,
O undivided TRINITY!

CHAPTER V.

Business of all kind poured in on the Archbishop at his return, and for some days almost overwhelmed him. Applications from the excommunicated Prelates were received by him, and answered courteously, but with firmness; that until they had made due reparation for their factious and insolent opposition to their ecclesiastical superior, he would not grant them absolution. Such as restored the confiscated lands were absolved instantly; the loss of their ill-acquired property serving as their penance. Among these Sir Ranulph de Broc was *not*. The nights of these days were in great measure spent by the Primate in writing to Pope Alexander, detailing the course of events, anticipating his approaching sufferings, and begging his prayers. Perhaps it was the same spirit of presentiment that had influenced a decision he had lately given on a case brought before him in Normandy. He happened to be passing a village in

that province, where the church was being rebuilt; and considerable dissension prevailed amongst its inhabitants as to the Saint in whose honour it should be dedicated. The Prelate's advice was requested: "Let it be to him," said he, "who shall be the first Martyr for the Church." And accordingly it is now named after S. Thomas of Canterbury.

Matters being in some degree set in order, the Archbishop proceeded to his palace in Southwark, intending thence to wait on the young King at Woodstock. At London Bridge he was met in the same manner as he had been at Canterbury; vast crowds going forth to welcome that city's most illustrious native; the regular Clergy from Westminster, from S. Bartholomew's, and from the hundred monasteries of the city, Knights of S. John and Knights Templars, all vied to do him honour: the secular Clergy, angry at their Bishop's excommunication, were less eager to pay him respect. His stay was cut short by a message from the young King, commanding his instant return to Canterbury; with which injunction he complied, acting on his maxim of rendering to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, while to do so did not interfere with rendering his own to GOD.

In the mean time the Bishops of London and Salisbury, and the Archbishop of York, had arrived in France. The King was then at Caen; and thither they betook themselves. It was a frosty December night that, riding past the two severely

simple, yet lovely, spires of the Abbaye aux Hommes built by William the Conqueror, and passing slowly along the ill-paved and narrow Rue de S. Pierre, they toiled up the castle hill, and having bestowed themselves, as they agreed, in its lodge, thence sent a message to the King, who was at the instant holding high revelry in the great hall, requesting his permission to wait on him instantly.

"Bishops from England!" said the King: "and at this hour of the night! and such a night too! What may this mean," he continued, addressing Leicester, "my lord Earl? Surely nothing more of the storms which he of Canterbury hath stirred up?"

"Not unlikely were it, my royal Lord, in my poor opinion," replied the Earl. "But very grievous wrong must they have suffered of him, or of others, ere they could come hither at such unseemly time, like fugitives and vagabonds."

"We shall shortly know," replied the King, "the full truth: for here come the holy Fathers, and by my royal word, something the worse for their speed. Welcome, my good lords! what errand soever bringeth you here; of which we will desire your Holinesses, at fitting opportunity, to tell us."

The revellers, many of whom had not heard the previous message, started from their seats with astonishment, as the toil-worn and weather-stained Prelates entered the hall. To their eyes the scene was gloriously bright. Two richly chased silver

chandeliers, fed with the purest and sweetest oils, hung over the raised dais; on the further side, in the middle of the long table, sat the King, between the Earls of Arundel and Leicester; Knights and Barons filled up the length of the banquet: there was the glittering of jewels, the sparkling of wines, the harmony of wind instruments, the perfume of curious odours, the splendour of gold and silver goblets: the rich light fell on tapestry of a deep blue ground, covered with stars of gold, and the servitors were hastening to and fro from the oriel with dishes of precious metal. But the laugh was hushed, and the clamour sunk, and a breathless silence came over the scene, as Roger of York, kneeling on the first raised step, and imitated in that gesture by his brethren, called out,

"We crave justice, most gracious King, against Thomas of Canterbury. He filleth England with confusion from one end to another. Us he hath excommunicated; he runneth through Kent with an armed band; and not Canterbury alone, but London also, hath been thrown into an insurrection by his presence."

"Now, by S. Denis," cried the King, in an ungovernable fit of rage, "shall this fellow, who came to our court at the first on a lame wall-eyed horse, trample on his King and on the whole kingdom in this sort? Will none of the lazy knights whom I feed rid me of this turbulent Priest?"

Scarcely had he spoken, when Sir William de

Tracy, who sat next to Fitz-Urse, with one look at his friend, rose, and was immediately followed by him. When they reached the passage, and the bustle of the hall died away,

"Now," said he, "Fitz-Urse, here is our time. Hearest thou not what the King hath said—Who will rid me of this turbulent Priest? Call the others out, while I see to our horses: for no time must we lose, lest we be prevented of going at all."

"Well said, De Tracy!" cried Fitz-Urse; "have with you! I will speed me back again as quickly as I may, and summon De Morville and Brito. Where meet you then?"

"At S. Giles' postern," replied the other; "there will I be." And so they parted.

In a quarter of an hour the four knights were in the saddle. "Now," cried Sir William de Tracy, "dally we not with time. Place here is there none for counsel; but we all know that hostelrie, Le Soleil d'Or, where last S. Andrew's day the hart of ten was killed. Meet we there some half-hour hence, and by different routes."

So saying, he dashed down the castle hill; and many were the honest burgesses, in different streets of Caen, who were wakened from their first sleep by the clattering of a horseman over the uneven pavement; and who, after crossing himself, and imploring our Lady's protection, fell off again to his slumbers.

In the mean time, the King's passion having somewhat subsided, and the Prelates having with-

drawn, previously to joining the banquet, conversation, for a while interrupted, was again resumed, and turned chiefly on the intolerable audacity of the firm pontiff.

"Hath your Royal Highness," said the Earl of Leicester, "noted that we be four less in the company than we were when the holy Fathers arrived here?"

"So there be, on my honour," replied Henry, looking round the room, and marking the four empty seats. "Who be they that be gone?"

"An I mistake not," answered Leicester, "De Tracy and De Morville be two; the third is Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse; and the fourth Richard Brito."

"Wherefore departed they, sans leave taken? What sayest thou?" enquired the King somewhat angrily.

"Have I your royal licence to speak my thoughts?" asked Leicester.

"Of a surety," said the King. "Speak boldly, lord Earl, and quickly."

"Fast enemies be they all to Becket, my liege; and they did all leave the hall together, an I err not, and just as your Highness did say, Is there none who will rid me of the turbulent Priest?—Your royal wisdom will guess my fear."

"Now God forefend! my lord," said Henry, turning very pale. "Our Lady forgive me! I did speak in rage; but I would not for half my kingdom that a hair of his head were touched. Noted any here"—and he raised his voice as he spoke

—"noted any here, when the four knights whom we miss did leave the presence?"

None could remember when or how they went; but all agreed that they had not been seen since the ill-fated speech of the King.

"Who will take horse," cried the King in great agitation, "and bring them back? If only it be possible."

"I will, my liege," answered Leicester, rising. "An I outride them not, it shall not be for sparing the spur. Who goeth with me?"

"I will," said young Sir Aymer de Boishardin, rising also; "an I have his Highness' licence."

"And our thanks too, Sir Aymer," said the King, "and to you, my good lord. But we pray you let us hear of your success before we sleep."

"If possibly we may, your Highness shall do so," replied Leicester. "And now, Sir Aymer, to horse!"

While the revellers drank success to the adventurous knights, Leicester was enquiring from seneschal, esquire, and porter, of those who had thrown the banquet-hall into such confusion. Not being able to obtain any satisfactory information, he decided, after a brief consultation with his companion, on striking out on the Havre road; nothing doubting that England was the object of those whom he was pursuing.

What Norman traveller is there who knows not the village of Goustranville, with its long and

tedious ascent, crowned by its fair Early French church, long narrow lancets in the steep-roofed chancel, and taper spire? At the west end of the churchyard the houses fall back, and leave a kind of village square open to, but not in the road. Here, at the time of which I write, stood with its projecting bush, the Soleil d'Or; and here, as the angelus of peace tolled out from the tower, the men of blood reined up their horses.

"Now, be we all good and staunch men?" asked De Tracy. "He that will not venture all on this cast, let him return like a coward, and if he will, betray us."

"I will follow you, De Tracy, to the death!" cried Fitz-Urse.

"So will I," said Brito. "Beyond it, thou must hold me excused."

"So will I," said De Morville, but more hesitatingly; "provided always that no violence be done to the old man if he submitteth unto our demands peaceably."

"Who talketh of violence in that case?" said De Tracy. "Marry, we will use all diligence in treating him with gentleness; therefore go we forth," he added with a half laugh.

"But now, Sir Knights," cried Brito, "meseemeth it not expedient that we all journey together, lest our purposes be discovered. Where meet we in England?"

"At Saltwood Castle," said De Tracy; "there

is a right convenient place. But this remember, that if ye shall arrive, one or all, before me, Sir Ranulph De Broc may no further be trusted than I shall lead the way. And how far that may be I know not till I be come thither."

"Then," said Fitz-Urse, "we were best to feign ourselves bound on an especial message from the King to London, and that we at that castle have appointed to tarry for each other."

"If he asketh why we came not all together?" asked Morville.

"Answer, that the King's business so requireth," said De Tracy.

"Hark!" said Brito, "hear you nothing on the wind?"

"No," said all, after a pause of listening.

"Listen again!" cried Brito.

"By our Lady! there be horses," exclaimed De Tracy. "We be pursued. Quick! and draw the horses together into the field, and behind yon hedge. Let them pass us."

They all crouched down in the spot indicated in silence, and in a few minutes the sound of two horses, galloping hard from Caen came sharply along the frosty road. Another minute, and they were reined up in the before-mentioned square. Clouds of steam rose round them in the cold air; and the Knights knew Leicester's voice.

"Enquire," he said, "De Boishardin, of the

man that ringeth curfew, if he have heard horses pass this way. I will hold thy horse."

The young Knight hastened into the belfry, and made the inquiry. "He saith, lord Earl," said he, returning, "that such he heard some few minutes agone, and he believeth they be gone forwards towards Havre."

"On then!" cried the Earl. The Knight vaulted into his saddle, and the panting horses sped forward.

"By our Lady!" cried De Tracy, "a perilous adventure! Part we must, and that with all speed."

"So be it!" said Fitz-Urse. "We meet at Saltwood."

"Agreed!" cried all, as by different lanes they struck out of the main road from Caen to Havre.

CHAPTER VI.

Archbishop Becket, on his return to Canterbury, was received with almost equal expressions of joy with those which had accompanied his first entry. He was now universally acknowledged as the great defender of the Church; and the only fear entertained by his admirers and friends was, lest any thing in his future career should tarnish the lustre of his past sufferings. Reports were spread, that finding so much opposition and hatred among the Barons, and having met with so decided a check from the young King, his spirits failed him, and he had some idea of compromising his differences. Some such rumour probably caused Peter Cellensis, in a letter to John of Salisbury, to write thus:—

"Ye who are the hands and the eyes of the Archbishop, by your holy exultations and prayers, lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble

knees. No wonder if his tribulations and sorrows cause him to be afflicted in spirit. But if he resteth and trusteth wholly in Him who causeth His elect to take firm root in the Rock, he shall bear in safety every whirlwind and tempest. Of a surety the ancient Fathers did sometimes faint in their tribulations; yet their charity increased in their languishing, and their fortitude had furtherance from their infirmity. Which, lest it should appear incredible to us, saith the Apostle, 'when I am weak, then am I strong.' And he sheweth wherein, adding, that our 'strength is made perfect in weakness.' Ye are to remember, that albeit 'the waves of the sea are mighty and rage horribly, the LORD That dwelleth on high is mightier; Who turneth the storm into a calm, and the anger of the king into gracious favour.'"

But, well meant as were these exhortations, the holy Prelate needed them not: natural as were the fears of his friends, the glory to which he had attained was, in a few days, as to be tenfold increased, so to be rendered secure and everlasting. Every thing else he had given up for the Church: it was to be seen whether, like a valiant pastor, he could die for his flock.

That was a melancholy Christmas-day for the Archbishop's followers. High Mass ended, the Primate ascended the pulpit; and having spoken of the love that day displayed towards mankind, and shewn how, if GOD so loved us, we ought also to

love one another, he proceeded to dwell on the guilt of those who offended against that love, by violating the Unity of the Church. And he concluded by again excommunicating those who had been most forward in those evil deeds: "Let them," said he, "be accursed from JESUS CHRIST, and cut off from the communion of the Saints!" The anger and darkly expressed purposes of revenge with which these denunciations were heard, excited the greatest anxiety in the minds of his followers for the event: but the three succeeding festivals passed over, and High Mass was said, on each, by the Primate, the crowd remaining as reverent and orderly as usual.

The afternoon of the last of these Feasts, that of the Holy Innocents, set in tempestuously; the sky was enveloped in one dark shroud of vapour; the branches, stripped and desolate, which overhung the steep lane leading up to Saltwood Castle, were dashed by the north wind against each other; and as night came on, the gale sighed more mournfully among the thickets and withered grass which skirted it. Up this lane a knight might have been seen urging his weary horse, against the sleet and snow which began to drive furiously; and ever and anon casting an eager glance towards the light, with its red and flickering glow, which danced from the windows of the great hall. Suddenly he appeared to behold before him, through the winter-twilight, some object which made him excite his horse to still

greater speed; and in a moment he reined him in by the side of another armed and mounted knight.

"Save you, Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse!" he cried, "I think the fiends have raised this storm. Saw you ever the like of the season?"

"De Tracy!" said Fitz-Urse; "I was even now marvelling if I were last of the company; but, as it seemeth, thou at least art behind me."

"Be our friends before us?" enquired the other.

"Nay," answered Sir Reginald, "how should I tell? I have seen nought of them since we parted at Le Soleil d'Or. Hast thou?"

"Not I," returned De Tracy. "They fell not in with Leicester, however: for I hear that he returned to the court in marvellous great dudgeon, swearing that Satanas must have hid us from his eyes."

"God send they be not food for the fishes!" cried the other: "but a troubled passage had I over the water."

"And so," said his friend, "had I. But be of good hope; methinketh I hear horsemen behind."

"Pray heaven they be friends!" cried Fitz-Urse, as the strangers came nearer. "What, ho! who goeth there?"

"Fitz-Urse!" cried the voice (for it was too dark to see the person) of Brito. "Is that thou?"

"Aye, marry," replied he addressed; "and De Tracy too. De Morville, art thou there?"

"Yea," answered Sir Hugh; "and an eviller

night never beheld I. I marvel we be all come together. Brito and I have seen nought of each other till a few hours agone."

"And Fitz-Urse and I met even now," cried De Tracy. "Marry, this sleet is like a Sherwood flight of arrows."

"On, in the devil's name, Sir Knights!" cried Fitz-Urse angrily. "Let us not stand chattering here like pyes, when a good roaring fire of logs, and a good pasty of doe, washed down with a right fair cup of French wine, were more germane to the purpose."

A few minutes brought them to the porter's lodge. The old man, half terrified by the unusual sight of four Knights on reeking steeds, the steam from whom threw a halo round his torch, as soon as he learnt their names, enquired somewhat fearfully their business.

"To see thy lord," cried De Tracy. "Is he not within?"

"Within is he," said the old man, "but marvellous much distempered."

"Distempered!" said the knight. "Ill in body meanest thou? or what aileth him?"

"Nay, my lord," replied the porter, "in mind he aileth. Ever since he was first excommunicated, he hath been much altered; but since the Archbishop did, on Christmas-day last, himself again lay him under excommunication, he hath been as one, ever and anon, possessed of an evil spirit. Marvellous

much sorrow is there in the house, for we love him as his father, whom GOD assoilzie!" And the tears came into his eyes.

"Heard ye ever, Sir Knights, the like of this Becket?" asked De Tracy. "Go thy ways, sir porter: tell thy lord who is here, and, as I am knight, we shall be the best leeches he hath known of a long time."

"GOD send ye be," muttered the old man, as he walked off: "but there is little good in that De Tracy; ever since he perjured himself in the matter of Eadwith, he hath gone from bad to worse; and I fear me, my lord hath gotten all this sore trouble by consorting with him. I marvel how he and the sweet lady Agnes could have come of the same stock; they be more different than rose and nettle. Well! I will e'en do my business!" he added, as he gave notice that four Knights desired to speak with his lord.

Their weary horses disposed of, and themselves ushered into Sir Ranulph de Broc, his visiters almost started at the traces of mental suffering which were visible in his pale cheek and sunken eye.

"Our Lady be praised, De Tracy," said he, "that thou art come. Never have I known one moment's peace since I promised thee to retain those lands till thou shouldst return. Now be I quit of that promise; and to-morrow will I give them up."

"I had hoped," said Sir William, considerably disappointed at his friend's resolution, "that thou hadst more courage than to mind this bugbear that hangeth over thee. However, every man to his taste! We," he continued, with a glance at his companions, "be bound to London, on the King's business, and have made bold to bespeak us a night's lodging here."

"With all my heart," cried De Broc. "I have thereto given orders, and such poor fare as I can command, shall you taste with all convenient speed. As ye go forth for London to-morrow, I will ride with you as far as Canterbury: for thither am I bound to see Archbishop Becket touching this same business. Why, how now?" he added, after a pause; "methinketh my company seemeth less agreeable unto you:" for the disconcerted Knights looked on each other as not knowing exactly how to proceed.

"Why," said Fitz-Urse, "the truth is that I—or that we—arise—that is, we set forth—that is, we must be at Canterbury betimes, and——"

"Besides," said De Tracy, "Becket is at Dover. He tarrieth to-morrow at GOD'S House: thither must thou, if thou seekest him."

"Gramercy!" cried Sir Ranulph: "a wearisome ride hast thou spared me. To Dover then will I with all convenient speed."

"Remember," said De Tracy, "I have done my part—I have warned thee against this mad concession: now take thine own way; I have done."

"On my honour," returned De Broc, "I believe thou meanest me well, and holdest me dear; but in this case must our paths be different. Nevertheless, I thank thee for the pains thou hast spent on my behalf."

The seneschal marshalling the way, the Knights now repaired to the great hall, where we shall leave them to do justice to the good cheer set before them. Turn we now to see how Thomas of Canterbury behaved himself on the last evening he was to spend on earth.

"Something warneth me," he said to Warel, as they sat alone in his private chamber late that night, engaged, by the soft light of one silver lamp, over documents of various kinds, "that my time draweth very near; therefore have I, as thou mayest partly have observed, given the more diligence to set right all such matters as were most in disorder. One thing only remaineth—that I do thee justice: for never had Bishop, I think, a more true and a more zealous servant than thou hast been. To-day have I also settled this; and therein, I think, have done my last earthly business. As I hear, the Priory of Chicksands is now deprived of its head; and thee have I recommended to it: I charge thee that thou be as diligent a servant of Holy Church there, as thou hast been in thy service with me."

"O holy Father," cried Warel, "I pray you not thus to speak! God will not suffer you to be taken off in the midst of your days; in a good old age He

will bring you down to the tombs of your predecessors in yon Cathedral. But surely not now! The captain shall not die when the battle is won, nor the pilot be suddenly removed when the vessel reacheth port. It cannot be that we should now have to cry, My Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"

"Nevertheless, my son," said the Primate, "rest assured that so, and no otherwise, will it be. Art thou content, therefore, with the place to which I have preferred thee, or not?"

"In good sooth," replied Warel, "I know not how to thank your Fatherliness as I ought for so far agracing me. But I pray you, suffer me not to leave your Holiness; let me still hold the station I have held, and more content shall I be than with any wealth or honour."

"So be it," answered the Archbishop: "attend us thou shalt while we live, if thou art content to take that office when we are gone."

"But," said Warel, "GOD hath hitherto preserved your Paternity through many fears and dangers; and will He not be thy Shield and Buckler still?"

"Of a surety He will, my son. But remember how blessed Bernard of Clairvaux expoundeth that text, teaching that as the buckler is broad in its upper end, thereby protecting the heart and other vital members from harm, but slopeth off towards its inferior portion, thereby leaving the feet to the enemy; so GOD promiseth to protect from all danger

the most noble part of man, which is his spirit: from earthly mishaps to preserve him, He promiseth not."

And the Archbishop's feelings that night might well be summed up in the Compline Hymn, *Adsis, Superne* SPIRITUS:

Come, O Thou Father of the poor,
Blest PARACLETE, below;
And from the abundance of Thy store,
Thy promised gift bestow.

Now that the day's created beam
Hath faded into night,
Still let Thy glories o'er us stream,
O Uncreated Light!

Come to our spirits, Heavenly Guest,
And bid their labours cease;
And in the sorrows of the breast
Mingle Thy perfect Peace!

Give us, O Fount of Grace, to fight,
Though foes stand thick around;
Fighting, to conquer in Thy Might,
And conquering, to be crown'd!

Praise to the FATHER, as is meet,
Praise to the Only SON;
Praise to the Holy PARACLETE,
The Blessed THREE in ONE!

CHAPTER VII.

It was about eleven o'clock on the following morning, that, as the Archbishop was sitting in conversation with some of his Clergy and certain of the monks of S. Augustine's, word was brought him that four Knights were anxious to speak with him. And on being ushered into his presence, the four conspirators, unarmed, but with looks of the deadliest hatred, took their seats without salutation or reverence.

"My son," said Thomas of Canterbury, after a pause, addressing himself to Sir William de Tracy, "if thou and thy friends, whom we know not by name, yet welcome them as befitteth a Bishop, will so far honour our poor table as this day to dine with us, we shall hold ourselves much agraced by your company."

"Know us, or not know us, Sir Archbishop," said Fitz-Urse, "we know thee, and that for an old

and pestilent traitor; a rebel unto the King, and a breaker of the laws, odious to GOD, and hateful to all good men: with whom we will neither eat nor drink; nor yet would we speak, but that we have a message unto thee from the King, which we must perforce deliver."

"And which we advise thee with all humility," added Brito, "to receive: for thy intolerable pride, however much it might win on the rabble at Fretvile, weigheth nothing at all with us."

"Wherefore," said the former, "we do thee to wit that if thou wilt receive in good part our message, well; if not, thou wilt make this world too hot for thee."

"In sooth, my Lord of Canterbury," observed De Tracy, "these Knights do, though in somewhat rough manner, speak the truth. Our message is briefly this: the King willeth that you retire whence you came, beyond the seas; inasmuch as he can no longer govern in London, while so haughty a priest reigneth at Canterbury."

"He demandeth also, that you forthwith absolve the Bishops whom in your rage you excommunicated," said Fitz-Urse.

"And he commandeth your immediate answer by us," added Brito.

"Hear me! my sons," said the Primate calmly, while some of the Clergy left the apartment, and the rest, excepting Warel, crowded together as if to protect each other: "Hear me! by GOD's Grace,

none shall see me crossing the seas again; none shall separate between me and my Church any more. If any seeketh me, here let him come to find me: for I shall not fly. The Bishops whom ye speak of, not by us were they excommunicated, but by the Roman See; nor by us shall they be restored, save after due satisfaction given, which hath not as yet been done. Moreover, if any other do, after their example, presume to violate the law of GOD, or the Canons of Holy Church, we will execute the same punishment on them; of which ye may rest well assured."

"You will do it then, Sir Archbishop," cried Fitz-Urse, "at your own peril: for deem not that the King will allow so great an insult to pass unrevenged. And for our own parts, we will be very willing executioners of whatever he shall order herein."

"I doubt not that ye will, my sons," returned the Prelate. "And know this, that more willing ye cannot be to inflict, than I to endure martyrdom. Seek to terrify others: in the name of the LORD I will meet you foot to foot."

The porter, who had been a witness of this scene, now went out to the priests and monks who were assembled in the hall.

"An ye come not back the faster," he said, "there will be blood shed in this quarrel. These Knights be prepared for any iniquity."

Some of them, ashamed of deserting their Primate

at his need, returned; and the Knights, partly overawed by their presence, partly for the greater convenience of consultation, retired.

"My sons," said the Primate gently, "did ye well to flee and to leave me in my need? I am ready to die for you; but ye, it seemeth, have not courage to look on my death."

"Holy Father," said the porter returning, "the Knights are putting on their armour: wilt thou not give order that the doors be made fast?"

"Wherefore should they?" asked the Archbishop. "Trust we in God, and not in man. Knights may defend themselves knightfully, with arms; a Bishop suffereth bishopfully, when he offereth no defence."

"I pray your Fatherliness," said Warel, kneeling, "give orders that the doors be closed! God forbid thou shouldst not act as a Christian Bishop; but what letteth to use such means of defence as be put into our hands?"

"Be it then as thou wilt, my son," answered Becket; and the doors were accordingly shut.

"By our Lady!" exclaimed De Tracy, "as having armed themselves the Knights returned to the palace, "the knave Archbishop hath made fast his doors. What do we now?"

"Tarry awhile," cried Brito: "I know an entrance by a back way which will easily lead us to him; but methinketh it were better not to press in thither now, when there be a herd of monks around him. If we delay our going a little, we shall find

him more free of them; and the easier execute our purpose with him."

"Sir William," said Sir Hugh de Morville, "to terrify the Archbishop I was willing enough; but I pray you think what you go about now. He deserveth to die—but not at our hands: we shall not be his executioners, but his murderers. Pray you consider whether, instead of the King's thanks, we shall not have the hatred of all good men."

"Didst thou think, then," asked De Tracy, "that we came hither from Caen only to speak a few harsh words? Marry, an that were all, we might well have spared ourselves the trouble. If thou fearest to join us, leave us; the more thanks shall we have."

"Aye, marry," cried Fitz-Urse, "we want no unwilling hands; we can do our own business well enough."

"Something too public is this place," observed De Tracy; "let us withdraw awhile to our hostelrie; and when they think us gone, and be dispersed, then, De Brito, will we follow thee."

"Be those men well placed about the avenues?" asked Fitz-Urse: "else some of the citizens, with whom this man is in great favour, may play the part of his protectors."

"I have seen to that," replied Brito. "Fear nothing from them. Only have patience, and our way will be easy."

The winter sun was sinking towards the horizon; but the Primate's sun was never to set. The greater

part of the Clergy, conceiving the danger to be over, had retired. Warel, Hubert, and a few others were still with him. Suddenly, at a back gate, was heard the sound of blows and outcries; and the porter, entering with terror in his countenance, cried out—

"Fly, my good lord, fly! The traitors be here again; they be forcing a way through the postern, and may not be much longer kept out!" With great persuasion, and not without some force, the Archbishop allowed himself to be led from the palace; and entering by way of the Chapter-house, stood before the Altar of S. Dionysius the Bishop, in the north-western Transept. Vainly they urged him to allow the doors of the Cathedral to be fastened; he absolutely refused. "We must triumph," he said, "by suffering, not by resisting; we came not hither to oppose, but to yield." They stood a few moments in an agony of suspense; while the sweet strains of the Vesper Psalms, then chanted in the Choir, stole mellowly through aisle and chapel; and the dim rays of the sun gleamed fainter and fainter. "Canterbury," said the Primate again, "hath among her Prelates blessed Elphegius, that true martyr; another, ere long, shall be added to her calendar." Heavy steps were now heard along the Chapter passage; and the monks, terrified beyond measure, cried in vain on their Archbishop to fly; and finding him resolute, rushed, some into the Choir, and others to the great Western door. Voices

were now heard, shouting, "Where is the traitor? where is the Archbishop?"

"Here is the Archbishop," said he, stepping boldly forward with the Chalice, taken from the before-named Altar, in his hand, "but no traitor. Farewell, my son; I am ready to die for Him Who shed His blood for me."

"Absolve the Bishops," cried Fitz-Urse, "and not a hair of your head shall be touched."

"Never," returned the holy Martyr, "till satisfaction hath been made by them."

"Be that thy death-warrant then," cried De Tracy; and the Knights endeavoured to drag him to the door of the church. Finding their efforts useless, "Why not dispatch him here?" cried Fitz-Urse.

"Gladly will I die," answered the Primate, "for the peace of the Church; only I charge you, in GOD's name, touch none of the monks or servitors, for they have done you no harm."

The murderers paused one moment; and in that interval the sweet notes floated down from the Choir, "the Father of Mercies, and GOD of all consolation." They were the last the Martyr heard.

Five minutes afterwards the four Knights were spurring, followed by many of their retainers, towards Dover. A crowd of priests and Benedictines surrounded the mutilated remains of the Martyr; Warel, severely wounded, was borne towards S. Augustine's; the city was in an uproar; the Cathedral

was thronged with those who came to be certified of the sad truth, and those who remained to assist or to counsel. A litter having been hastily formed, the body of the martyred Prelate was borne into the church of S. Augustine's; and there it lay that night.

* * * *

"The pastor of our souls,"—thus wrote Peter Cellensis on that sad night,—"is gone: and yet I cannot mourn; he hath departed, not perished; he is not dead, but sleepeth. The martyrdom by which the LORD hath glorified His servant, is the port of life; he hath entered into the delights of the Heavenly land; into the bosom of Abraham; into the abyss of eternal glory. He hath gone on a journey, having taken his treasure with him; and shall in due season return again. His soul, rich in good works, shall at the general resurrection return unto her ancient abode. When thus he had prepared himself for his heavenly journey, Death, who met him, suffered him not to pass without a tribute. He that had long desired to put off his humanity and to be with CHRIST, gladly paid it, even the tribute of a little dust and clay. Thence went a rumour abroad among the people, that *an evil beast hath devoured Joseph.* They beheld the lacerated garment, even his body that he had put off; and thence judged that he had perished. But *Joseph yet liveth, and is ruler over the whole land of Egypt.* His blessed soul, freed from her corruptible taber-

nacle, hath taken her departure to her reward. Called he was of Him That said, "I go to prepare a place for you: I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." He being of short life, hath yet lived long. He is called to heaven, of whom the world was not worthy; his light is no longer concealed under a bushel. In the sight of the universe he seemed to die; but his life is hid with CHRIST in GOD. Death seemed to swallow him up; death itself is swallowed up in victory. The LORD hath granted him the request of his lips; he hath drunk, like his Master, of the brook in the way: therefore hath he lifted up his head. The LORD, Who brought from the dead that Great SHEPHERD of the Sheep, raise up one who, in the stead of him that is gone, may be over this great people!"

CHAPTER VII.

Sir Ranulph de Broc, at an early hour of the same day on which his guests left him, set forth for Dover. Arrived at the gate of God's House, all things seemed to him to retain their usual appearance: whereas he had expected that some bustle and preparations would be manifest, occasioned by their noble guest.

"Is the Lord Archbishop yet to be seen?" he enquired of the porter.

"For whom asketh your Lordship?" asked he in return.

"For Archbishop Becket," replied De Broc. "He tarrieth here; is it not so?"

"Never heard I word spoken of his coming here, Sir Knight," answered the porter. "But of a surety he tarrieth now, as ever, in his palace at Canterbury."

"Then have I been strangely deceived," replied

the other. "Of a surety I was told by one that should have known, that he had lodged here these days past. But an he be at Canterbury, thither must I."

"Thou wert better to refresh thyself here, an I might advise," said the porter; "an thou needest not rest, thy horse doth."

Sir Ranulph, under the consciousness of his censure, replied,

"My errand requireth speed: else had I gladly tarried; and gramercy for thy offer."

So having refreshed himself and his horse at an obscure hostelrie in the town, he rode slowly on to Canterbury; musing on the nature of the offer he had to make, and the probable nature of its acceptance. When some four miles from the city, he was astonished to meet, riding as if pursued by a deadly enemy, the four Knights whom he had entertained the preceding day. His astonishment was increased by the manner in which they met, or rather passed him; not a moment did they pause, nor a token of recognition did he obtain. And at a somewhat quicker pace he rode on; eager to obtain the clue to this difficulty.

On entering the city, he at once perceived that something extraordinary had occurred: men were standing in knots of two or three at the corners of the streets in anxious converse; priests were streaming to the Cathedral; burgesses hurrying to the

town-hall; women collected at the doors of their houses; and even children standing aghast, as if terrified at some news, which they could not above half comprehend. At last, riding up to one party, he said,

"I pray you, my masters, what meaneth all this tumult? Is there any ill news received from any place?"

"The Archbishop is slain," they all answered with one voice.

"Slain!" repeated Sir Ranulph. "When, I pray you, and how?"

"Even now," they answered, "by four Knights; but their names I know not."

"Rode they forth this way?" he enquired, anxiously.

"Even so," was the reply, "some hour agone."

The treachery and bloodthirstiness of his friends working on his mind, the possibility of his having prevented the catastrophe, the shelter he had given to those who meditated it, the sudden and violent death of the Prelate whom he had injured,—all these considerations seemed to take away his breath; and he sat as one in a stupor. At length, having enquired for Abbat Odo, and having been informed that he was supposed to be at S. Augustine's, he proceeded thither; and with great difficulty having made his way through the crowds that beset the doors into the church, he found it full of

ecclesiasticks of every description. Some were discussing in the nave the great event,—the bravery of Warel, the cowardliness of the other Monks who stood near the Primate, the audacity of the Knights, the probability of the guilt or innocence of the King; nay, even the choice of a successor was already canvassed. Passing by these, and in the confusion that prevailed making his way into the choir, he saw Abbat Odo standing near the High Altar, and at the head of the bier, whereon the body of the Martyr was laid. A linen cloth had been spread over it, and the rich Archiepiscopal robes in which the Prelate had fallen, were nearly but not quite concealed by it. Not a word was spoken by any of the bystanders: they gazed on the lifeless form before them, and seemed occupied in unspoken prayer. Bursting through them, and throwing himself at the feet of Odo, the Knight bursting into a passionate fit of tears, confessed the whole of his past conduct, and earnestly begged for absolution.

"O blessed saint!" said the Abbat, "of a verity thou hast triumphed! Of a truth, now, as ever, the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church!" And then, in the midst of that assembly, and in the presence, as it were, of the Prelate who had inflicted it, Ranulph de Broc was absolved from the Church's censure.

Agnes de Tracy had heard the fatal news: she

knew that her brother was among the murderers: she knew that her affianced husband had given them shelter on the preceding night, and that when he had imagined himself injured by the martyred Archbishop; and it seemed as if the measure of her grief was full. How she heard the news of Sir Ranulph's innocence and absolution; how she received him when in her presence he pleaded his own justification; the eloquence of his words, and the tenour of her answers,—all this must be left to the reader's fancy. We only know that on a high-tomb of Early English workmanship, on the south side of the chancel of Saltwood church, might once be seen the recumbent effigies of a knight and his lady. His feet rested on a lion, her's on a hound; the hands of the lady were clasped, those of the knight contained a church, thereby showing him to be the founder of one. She was vested in the mantilla and embroidered petticoat; he had the coif-de-mailles on his head, chasseurs of mail and genouilleres of plate; his legs crossed; and he had a simple prick spur. And the legend was,

Sire : Ranulph : de : Broc : et : Agnes : sa : feme :
gisont : icy :
Dieu : de : ler : almes : eyt : mercy : amen.

Of Warel, we can only tell the reader, that if he will visit the church of Keysoe, in Bedfordshire, around the base of the font, which is of early

English date, he will find the following inscription :—

✠ Trestuí : bous : kí : par : hící : passeruí :
Pur : lalme : de : Warel : priuí :
Ke : Deu : par : sa : grace :
Verraí : merci : lí : asse.

Which might thus run in modern French :

Restez, vous qui par ici passerez,
Pour l'âme de Warel priez :
Que Dieu par sa grâce
Voudrait merci lui faire.

It falls not within the limits of our design to relate how the death of S. Thomas, by procuring the abrogation of the Constitutions of Clarendon, gave that liberty to the Church which was the aim of his life. And sooner than in most other cases was his holy constancy and courage acknowledged by men; princes knelt at his shrine; his enemies extolled his virtues: the Church soon asked his intercession in her prayers; pilgrims from all lands flocked to his tomb; and the 7th of July, 1220, saw his remains removed from the undercroft to the magnificent shrine prepared for them in Becket's Crown; which day thenceforth superseded in great measure that of his martyrdom, the Feast of his Translation falling at so much more favourable a season. As might have been expected, Henry the Eighth erased his name from the kalendar, and sentenced his remains to the wind; by

an express decree pronouncing that his life was madness, and his end without honour. Will not the true churchman reply—But he is in peace! How is he numbered with the children of GOD, and his lot is among the saints!

THE END.

PRINTED BY METCALFE AND PALMER, CAMBRIDGE.

HERBERT TRESHAM:

A TALE

OF

The Great Rebellion.

BY THE

REV. J. M. NEALE, B.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

"It is but fit that the memory of these sufferings should be revived, that they may not be repeated."

WALKER'S SUFFERINGS, p. vi.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G. F. & J. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE;

AND SOLD BY

T. STEVENSON, CAMBRIDGE.

1843.

LONDON:
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

PREFACE.

It may be well to observe, that the arguments and railings against the Church, which are put into the mouths of the Puritans in the following pages, are, without an exception, taken from contemporary pamphlets put forth by that party. I refer more particularly to the works of Lewis Hews, from which many of the speeches in Chapter VI. are extracted almost *verbatim*. To those who are but partially acquainted with the writings of that faction, it might appear incredible that such arguments could ever have been brought forward, or have produced, as they undeniably did, so much effect; and they might, without this notice, accuse me of wilfully drawing a caricature, instead of a likeness.

I may also mention that it is doubtful whether

White, the infamous author of the "*Century*," lived to the time of which the following tale treats; and the probability appears to be on the opposite side. The reader will therefore pardon the anachronism, if it be one.

PENZANCE,
The Feast of All Saints, 1842.

HERBERT TRESHAM.

CHAPTER I.

All is in busy, stirring, stormy motion ;
And many a cloud sweeps by, and none sojourns.
Lightly is life laid down among us now,
And lightly is death mourned—the worse for us !
He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend.

PHILIP VAN ARTIVELDE.

THE little village of Scaldwell, in Northamptonshire, the scene of the following story, lies about midway between the towns of Northampton and Kettering; and presents, even now, when commerce and manufactures have opened one of their greatest lines of communication in its neighbourhood, the beau idéal of an English hamlet. It is, indeed, but little altered, in outward appearance at least, from the time at which our tale commences,—the summer of the eventful year, 1645. The cottages may have been succes-

sively rebuilt, as one by one they yielded to the silent influence of the weather, or were enlarged and modernised to suit the tastes of successive lords and tenants: the parsonage, with its fair oriel, projecting porch, and high gables, has given way to an humbler, if more commodious, structure: yet these occupy the same places; and the village church, girded in with a lovely circle of elms, stands unaltered amidst surrounding changes: no bad type of that spiritual Church, immutable amidst a world of mutability, which summons Her children of to-day to the same prayers, comforts them with the same promises, and instructs them in the same lessons, as She set before their fathers and forefathers, long since departed in Her communion, and now at rest.

It was at the time when, more than at any other, earth seems to put on something of the calmness and holiness of Heaven,—a bright evening in the beginning of June, that Mr. Tresham, the rector of the parish we have just named, was returning with his daughter from a parochial visit to one of the more distant cottages. At a season, when with that remarkable presentiment of future events, so constantly occurring, and so difficult to explain, men's minds were filled with the expectation that some great and decisive event was about to take place, that some crisis was about to terminate the fearful struggle then devastating England, it is no wonder that after a few remarks on the inmates of the cottage they had just left, the conversation of the father and daughter

should turn on the state of political affairs, and the probable fate of the royal cause. Indeed, it was evident that a crisis was at hand: the unfortunate issue of the treaty of Uxbridge, in the preceding spring, had shown clearly that no terms of compromise could be expected; yet matters appeared so evenly poised, that human foresight could hardly guess on which side the scale would eventually incline. In the west, Taunton was hard pressed by the royal arms; the four associated counties, Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Somersetshire, were actively bestirring themselves to raise supplies of men and money for the King; the presence of the Prince at Bridgewater served admirably to consolidate the interests of those who supported the good cause, and his little court was the rallying point for the western royalists. It was hoped, that before the end of the month Taunton would be invested with an army of ten thousand men; and as it was known to be but indifferently garrisoned, its speedy surrender was confidently expected. In the north, the successes of Montrose had been the subject of much exaggerated report. It was, moreover, well known that the self-denying ordinance, passed in the previous spring, had disgusted many active partisans of the parliament: that the displacement of the Earl of Manchester from the dignity of commander-in-chief, in order to make way for Sir Thomas Fairfax, was viewed with suspicion: the new-modelling of the army was made the theme of much animadversion; and the resignations of the Earl

of Essex, Sir William Waller, and the Earl of Denbigh, were much lamented by many. Preparations, too, for the ensuing campaign, were more forward on the side of the royalists than on that of the rebels. To a casual observer, therefore, the balance might appear to preponderate for the former; but they who looked more deeply into things would have come to a different conclusion. That which, after all, constituted the chief strength of the royal cause, was the veneration for long-established usages, the love of the past, the instinctive abhorrence of change, the belief in

> "Power, by a thousand tough and stringy ties,
> Twined to the people's pious nursery faith,"

which till then had been the Englishman's birthright and dearest portion: and these had been sorely wounded in the first campaign: the magic circle which fenced in the sacredness of majesty had been broken in upon; and now, that a second and third had passed, and a fourth was commencing, men began to feel that it was a triumph to rebellion not to have been overthrown, and that every month was reducing the moral strength of the contending parties to an equality. Rumours, too, spoke loudly of dissatisfactions and heartburnings in the court: dissensions between Prince Rupert and Lord Goring were more than hinted at; the licentiousness which pervaded Sir Richard Grenville's regiments was notorious; and the surprisal of Evesham by the parliamentary forces was looked

on as a bad omen for the following summer, and not at all counterbalanced by the capture of Hawkesley House, with a hundred and twenty prisoners. At a time, when, from the long peace it had so happily enjoyed, so little was known in England of the art of war, that two hostile regiments had marched in parallel lines the whole day at a distance of only four miles, without either being aware of the other's proximity, it cannot be supposed that authentic information would soon reach so obscure a village as Scaldwell. Scarcely a day passed but some extravagant rumour was afloat: now, that Fairfax had surprised Oxford; now, that Cromwell and Sir William Waller had possessed themselves of the Prince's person; now, that Goring had been defeated and killed, and the siege of Taunton raised. All the reports were unfavourable to the royal cause: a tendency, afterwards believed by some providentially ordered as a foreshadowing of the future event. Lively, indeed, was the interest taken when a copy of the 'Mercurius Rusticus' found its way into the village; failing that, curiosity was forced to rest contented with the tales of such straggling soldiers as from time to time visited the spot; or with the tales of those hawkers, who to their ordinary stock in trade, now added a large quantity of party lampoons, so arranged, that, as their customers were Roundhead or Cavalier, the collection might be laid before him which would best suit his views. For the former, they had such pamphlets as—'*Have ye any firebrands to your foxes? or a plain discovery of the*

popery and malignancy of his majesty's advisers;' 'Two looks over Lincoln;' 'The little great man: or the true portraiture of his grace in the Tower.' The latter were regaled with—*'A dialogue between pope and puritan; wherein is set forth their amity and agreement;' '*[1]*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear: or, a true delineation of a preacher in Friday Street.'* The village itself, with one or two exceptions, was loyal; several of the husbands and brothers of its inhabitants were serving for the king; and nothing had yet been felt in it of the immediate horrors of civil war. The best accredited accounts represented the king on his march to meet the Scotch army in Yorkshire; Fairfax, as hovering about Oxford; and Goring, as blockading, though but too negligently, Taunton.

"I almost marvel," said the rector, "that a time of such peace and holiness as this should not attune men's minds to love and unity. God made this beautiful world—for beautiful it is, after all,—for scenes far different from those it is now witnessing. Long as I have known this spot, it never seemed to me so lovely as now; perchance, because I never before felt how soon its loveliness might be intruded on and destroyed."

And a less partial eye than the rector's might have dwelt with delight on the scene. The sun was setting

[1] This title refers to the punishment of the notorious Henry Burton, lecturer for some time at St. Matthew's, Friday Street, and a great spreader of seditions and schismatical principles.

behind the high ground of Naseby on the right, and bringing its tower and windmill into strong relief against the pale gold of the western sky: immediately over the hill hung a long line of clouds, like thick dark foliage blossoming with gold; here and there a bright-winged purple cloudlet hung lazily in the air, as if loth to leave so much beauty; while the blue grey mist of a summer evening was stealing over the eastern landscape. Before, the tower with its glittering weathercock peeped above the trees; and the brown thatch and carved and twisted chimney stacks of the village cottages might here and there be caught sight of through the branches. The cattle were slowly wending to the farmyard; the hedger, putting off his *darnocks*, and gathering up his basket and implements; the team being led down to the village pond; and the silence only disturbed by those sweet sounds of rural peace that render it a luxury to linger near an English village on a summer's evening; the tinkling of the sheep-bell; the merry laugh from field or garden; the shutting of the cottage wicket; the cawing of some solitary crow winging its idle way homewards; and the occasional clanking of the blacksmith's forge.

"This is just the time," remarked Agatha, "that, before the troubles began, the bells would have been chiming for evening service. How much I miss it! it seems woven into all my happy recollections of childhood. I remember how my dear mother would bid us leave off our play in the hayfield when the bells

began, and talk to us of the privilege of being admitted day by day to worship in the church; and would tell us how David seemed to envy the very sparrows and swallows that had formed their habitations in God's house. Then, in winter, as we crossed the lawn, and looked up at the thousand bright stars twinkling over our heads, she would remind us, that if night after night praises God with such mute eloquence, much more should we magnify Him daily. And oh! in the bright summer mornings, how she would call us to remember the words of the psalm of praise in which we were so soon about to join; and tell us to look at those lovely heights of Naseby, and reflect that 'The strength of the hills is His also.' Oh! I do unspeakably miss the daily service!"

"Your mother, my Agatha, is taking part in a far nobler Daily Service; for it is written—His servants shall serve Him. She took delight here in approaching to God (and after the reverent fashion of the day, the rector raised his hat at the holy name) in His Temple: and what must be that House, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where she now is!"

"It seems but a day," Agatha continued, "since we assembled so happy a party in that same house. And now, how are we scattered! my mother gone to her rest; Herbert in all the danger of an army, exposed to instant action; Rose and I alone left to take care of you; and Basil—"

"Do not talk of him," replied her father; "do not

remind me that one of my children should have, by forgetting his allegiance to his earthly monarch, shown how little true allegiance he bore to his God. Herbert, at least, is doing his duty; and if all reports are true, is doing it right manfully. Still, if we had faith as a grain of mustard seed, we should believe that, after all, the strength of the royal cause lies more in the fervency of the prayers of its adherents, than in the strength of its armies, or the skill of its generals. It struck me much, the other day, that what Abijah said to Jeroboam, we may say to our assailants now: 'And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David; and ye be a great multitude. Have ye not cast out the Priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of other lands? But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the Priests that minister unto the Lord are the sons of Aaron; and the Levites wait upon their business: for we keep the charge of the Lord our God; but ye have forsaken Him. O House of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.'"

"That is a comforting point of view," replied his daughter. "Then you think that God will not suffer the enemies of His Church to prevail in this struggle?"

"Far be it from me, my child, thus to look forward into futurity. I do not, indeed, think that God

will suffer His Church in this land finally to fall; not, indeed, that He has given us a promise of the indestructibility of any portion of it, for it is of the Church Catholic that He has said 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it:' but still, 'Right dear in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints:' and I can hardly believe that a Church of more than twelve hundred years' standing, which can boast of more Saints and Martyrs than any other, which has sent out teachers and missionaries into all parts of the world, which has given such glorious proofs of zeal for GOD's honour in Her temples, and colleges, and religious foundations, should be permitted to fall without a struggle. She may, indeed, be called to pass through the fire of all afflictions; She may be counted worthy to suffer persecution for CHRIST's sake; and even in this very year one of Her Prelates has been called to a place in the noble army of Martyrs. But She will come forth refined and purified; GOD is with Her now, and right earnestly I trust that He will abide with Her."

"With us," said Agatha, "He has dealt most mercifully. Some of the accounts I have heard and read of the treatment that other clergymen and their wives and families have experienced, have made my blood run cold. I have often felt, that had I been called to such trials as have some of their daughters, I must have sunk under the temptation."

"Say not that," answered the clergyman; "GOD could, and, I doubt not would, have given faith

equal to the need. But we must not expect this state of things to continue. We are so completely placed between the two armies, that a visit from one or the other can hardly be escaped; and they say, since my Lord Goring's visit to Oxford, discipline has much relaxed in the royal army; so that in either case, our village would suffer."

"It is very sad," said Agatha, "that a good cause should use such unworthy means for its support."

"It is one of the necessary curses of a civil war," replied the rector. "When the troubles first began, the Royalists, and, to do them justice, in most instances, the Rebels, paid fairly and honestly for whatever they took; and the halt of the King's army at any village was a general holiday. Now, no one dreams of purchasing, when it is so much easier to take."

By this time, the speakers had reached the stile which leads from the fields to the village, and were surprised to see, galloping down the street, a horseman, whose whole appearance, even in the distance, bespoke him a cavalier. Men, women, and children, came to the doors of their cottages, and looked after him as he passed. He seemed to have travelled far and fast, for his jack-boots were sorely stained, and his accoutrements tarnished and neglected; and his horse, though a fine animal, seemed much distressed. As he passed the stile, he stopped short in the tune he was whistling,—'The King shall enjoy his own

again,'—checked his horse, and, having dismounted, came up to the rector, saying,

"I have a packet for your reverence."

"Ah, my good Will Denton, is it you?" said Mr. Tresham, recognizing at once his former parishioner's voice. "Whence have you come? How is my son? Where is the King? Tell me all."

"I came," said the other, "from our head-quarters, at Leicester. Colonel Tresham is well in health, and charged me with a letter for your reverence, and here it is."

"Thank God for that!" exclaimed Agatha, as her father proceeded hastily to cut the string that held the packet. "But at Leicester, say you? we thought the King far on his way to the North."

"We did march as far, an please you, as Chester; but then came news that the Roundheads were collecting about Oxford, and His Majesty thought fit to turn back, and to fall on Leicester, which we took Saturday night last."

"Leicester taken! Dear father, hear you the good news?"

"I have just been reading it here. Herbert gives the story at length: let us get back, and I will read it you. And what are you going to do, Denton?—to stay with us any time, or to return to the army?"

"I must return, please your honour, as soon as may be; if my horse can manage it, a stage or two this evening."

"Well, take him into my stables; the merciful man, you know, is merciful to his beast. And go down to your mother; she must be longing to see you. We will have a packet ready for you against your return."

Denton, who was eager to be again among his own family, rode off; the others followed him to the parsonage; and the letter was read as follows:—

"HONOURED FATHER,

"The bearer hereof hath promised, if he possibly may, to put this into your own hands; he hath dispatches for Kettering, and hath leave to return by you. I did, in my last, tell you how we had taken Hawkesley House; and now, by GOD'S blessing, there is much greater success to speak of. My Lord Byron did counsel His Majesty to surcease awhile marching northwards, and to fall upon Leicester: the which advice did please Prince Rupert very well. So Sir Marmaduke Langdale did, on Friday last, summon the town; and on Saturday was the whole army, horse and foot, drawn about it. Yet Sir Robert Pye returned no other answer than that he held it for the Parliament, and would defend it to the death. The which so traitorous speech did much enmove the Prince's anger. Thereupon he built a great battery with marvellous speed, and after dinner it played on the town by the space of four hours; and at five of the clock were we advertised that the assault was incontinently to begin, both at the breach and else-

where, but specially at the breach. It was my hap to be at the breach, which was indeed defended with notable resolution and courage, insomuch that we were repulsed from it twice; and the attack did continue all night. But early on the Sunday morning, Colonel Page, with certain horse, newly arrived from Newark, did by a back way enter into the town; and the governor and all the officers and soldiers threw down their arms, and surrendered themselves. A sad sight it was to see the pillage continue all that day, being Sunday; there were both churches and houses burned, and much excess of rioting. That which we might do to restrain the soldiers we did; but all thought not with me. I fear me, God will visit this upon us. Colonel Trelawney holdeth him heartily commended unto all, and specially to Agatha. Where next we shall march I know not as yet. God keep us all, and grant us a happy meeting. So prayeth your dutiful son,—Herbert Tresham.

"*Postscriptum.* Poor Maurice, the son of Widow Maurice, was shot by my side on the breach. I saw him buried to-day in S. Mary's churchyard, with all due ceremonies by the Church in that case ordained."

"We have much to be thankful for," said Mr. Tresham, as he refolded the letter, "on this account, and yet it is not without its causes of melancholy. Thank God, however, that they are both safe. My Agatha, there may be happy years in store for you yet, though I shall probably not see them."

"Yes, my dear father," she replied, "I trust there are happy years in store for both of us; not, dearest Rose, forgetting you. But what a melancholy Sunday must the last have been for them!"

"Melancholy indeed," said Rose; "the Day of peace, and the Houses of peace, profaned,—and that by those who are fighting for both. Oh! how could it have been allowed?"

"And think you, my child, that the unruly passions of men can be restrained as they can be excited, at will? Our gracious King—God long preserve him to us!—doubtless endeavoured to restrain the outrage; and Sir Marmaduke Langdale is, they say, as gentle as a dove, yet as bold as a lion. It is the lower class of officers, who, having risen from nothing by their animal courage and brutal strength, would sink into nothing again at the end of the war, who care not to what extremities they urge it."

At this moment the village bells struck up.

"Hark!" said Rose; "they know it in the village. But, dear father, will you not go and comfort poor widow Maurice?"

"We will all go," replied her father; "it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting. But, first, I will stop those bells, for they must sound painfully on that poor woman's ear."

The whole village was in a state of joyous excitement: groupes of two or three were collected at the doors of several of the cottages, who were discussing the probable consequences of the sack of Leicester.

Master Geoffrey, the village schoolmaster, seduced from the less inviting occupation of inspecting copy-books, or preparing cyphering lessons, by the interest of the occasion, was describing illustrative diagrams in the dust with his cane, and haranguing learnedly on the effects of the victory.

"And so, my masters, Leicester being here—that stone being Taunton,—and London lying here—the King—God bless him!—must effect an union with the brave Lord Goring. And so, when they have joined their forces, what is to hinder them from marching at once against the Rump? I say, my masters, what is to hinder them?"

"Taunton is a long way from Leicester," suggested one of the bystanders.

"A long way?" quoth Master Geoffrey. "Well; what an it be? I'll warrant you the King has marched a longer way before now. Why, the thing is as good as done. I say, all is up with the parliament: and I should like to see the man that would contradict me."

"Well," rejoined the other, "it's a good proverb, 'Fine evening makes fine day.'"

"Answer me this," said the schoolmaster; "When a man has lost his best hopes, is it not all up with him? And were not the rebels willing to give every thing else up, so they might save that place? And does not that prove what they thought their best chance? Well,—it is gone; and what, think you, will come next?"

"Excellently well argued, Master Geoffrey," said the rector, who had come up unperceived behind; "but surely a little less heat in your argument, my good friend, would not weaken its force. And what think *you*, Master Fletcher, of this business?" he continued, after sending to stop the bells, and nodding to, or interchanging a kind word with, such of his parishioners as were standing round.

Fletcher had served with Prince Rupert in the three preceding campaigns, and risen to the rank of a sergeant; but having, in the battle of Newbury, received a wound in his sword arm, he had petitioned for, and obtained his discharge; and retired soon after to his native village. He was its oracle in military matters; and being very intelligent, and an excellent loyalist and churchman, was a great favourite with Mr. Tresham and his daughters.

"Why, sir," he replied, "'tis as great a thing, in one way, as the King ever did; and it will put spirit into the army. But this plundering a town on Sunday, 'tis against the nature of things; no good ever came on't, nor ever will; and that's the plain truth."

"But you know," said Agatha, "that the officers did all in their power to prevent it."

"So they did, so they did; but it's no use arguing,—it's a bad job. Denton, down there, was telling how Colonel Tresham rode up and down all day, preventing outrages;—ay, Mistress Agatha, and Colonel Trelawney too; and it was well done of them, surely."

"Do you think this will make the King alter his plan of going north?" asked Mr. Tresham.

"Like enough it may, sir," answered the sergeant; "for Leicester—many's the time I've stood guard there, when *we* had it before—is a large place, and wants a good garrison; and the King has none too many men, I guess, to spare."

"Think you," said the clergyman, "they will try to recover it at once?"

"Hardly yet, sir; there is not force round about those parts, that I know of, to draw together to a head; and our side is too strong for them to think of such a thing just yet. They will be keeping a sharp eye upon it, however; that I'll be bound. Good evening, sir."

"Good evening, Fletcher; if you hear any news, be sure to come up to us with it."

The rector and his daughters next passed a group to whom Denton was describing the storm with much animation, and discoursing fluently of counterscarps, embankments, barbicans, bastions, and embrasures, to the great edification of his hearers; foremost among whom, in an ecstasy of pride and delight, was his mother. After a few words of congratulation, they proceeded to Widow Maurice's cottage.

It stood at some little distance from the village, and the way lay through one of those lanes, once the chief beauties of our country,—now fast disappearing before modern improvements. It was through a deep cut in sandstone; beeches and filberts and young

oaks anchored in the red fragments of rock, and threw a cool green shade over the lane below; and the birds on each side seemed chanting their vesper hymn.

The cottage of affliction lay on the other side. The widow was sitting in the chair where she had been knitting when the news reached her; her face was hid in her hands,—while her gossips were officiously tormenting her with the usual topics of consolation; miserable comforters indeed! The entrance of the clergyman made her look up; and well did he prove his title to be a servant of Him Who was sent to bind up the broken-hearted, by the tenderness and skill with which he spoke to her. He bade her not to sorrow, as those that have no hope; he reminded her of many little circumstances calculated to give her hope that her son had been called from the heat and tumult of battle into the land of everlasting peace; he laid before her GOD's promises of consolation and support in trial, and of especial tenderness to the widow; and finally, left her calm, if not cheerful.

It was now dusk; and his horse having been somewhat refreshed, Denton was eager to make the best use of the night for his journey. Charged with more than one letter, and bearing every kind message for both Herbert and Trelawney, he mounted his horse, and, favoured by a bright moon, started on his return; and the village resumed its usual quiet and repose.

CHAPTER II.

The spot, which angels deign'd to grace,
Is bless'd, though robbers haunt the place.

A WEEK rolled on, and brought with it no events of particular importance. It was now generally known that the King's northern expedition was abandoned, in consideration of the diminution which his forces had received, as well from the loss sustained in the storm of Leicester, as from the garrison placed there subsequently. After marching to Market Harborough, he finally took up his head-quarters at Daventry; there intending to await the further motions of the enemy. Fairfax was unfortunate everywhere; he had been unable to make any impression on Oxford; and had discouraged his troops by his unsuccessful attempt on Borstall House; after which, he retreated to Buckingham; whence, it was rumoured, he was preparing to march northward.

The evening of Wednesday, the 11th of June, 1645, was cold and stormy; the wind swept through the parsonage garden at Scaldwell, driving heaps of

leaves before it, as if it had been autumn, and howling mournfully round the old porch and high-pitched gables. Now and then, the moon would peep through the drifting clouds for a moment, as if to reveal more distinctly how great was the fury of the tempest. Mr. Tresham was in his study, deeply engaged in a perusal of Bishop Montague's posthumous work,—*Annals of the Christian Church*, which, though published two years, had only then, for the first time, found its way into Northamptonshire; his daughters were quietly pursuing some article of household work, and occasionally remarking on the violence of the storm, or drawing an imaginary picture of the position of the army in which their brother served, and where it might be his lot, on such a night, to be bivouacked. It was about nine o'clock, when old Bates, Mr. Tresham's servant, announced that Sergeant Fletcher desired to speak to his master.

"Tell him to step in, John," said the rector, closing the volume, and stopping short in an elaborate discussion on the principles and extraordinary success of the Donatists.

"He says, sir, that he had rather speak to your honour alone."

"Well, well; ask him to step in first, and let me hear him for myself."

The servant withdrew; and in a few moments reentered, ushering in the sergeant, whose whole appearance proved him to have been for some hours exposed to the wind and rain.

"Why, sergeant, where have you been on such a night as this? you should have a better care of yourself. My cellar is not very rich; but a cup of canary were not, methinks, amiss, in keeping off the cold."

"Thank your reverence, kindly; but an old soldier like me cares but little for such a sprinkling as this: and I have that to say which must be said at once; and, if you so willed it, alone."

"I have no secrets from my daughters, Fletcher, if what you have to say concerns me; if otherwise, of course I am at your service."

"I thought the young ladies might be frightened to hear it, sir; but if you think not, I will out with it at once."

"They are a clergyman's daughters, sergeant, and ought not to be so easily terrified as others. So, now your story, whatever it is."

"Well then, sir, to make a long matter short, the enemy is not so far off as we thought."

"What mean you? Fairfax? Why, where is he, then?"

"To-night he lies at Northampton; and they say marches northward to-morrow."

There was a pause. "God's will be done!" said the rector, at length. "We are spared from the uncertainty as to the course to be pursued, which might be the portion of others. My duty is plain,—to abide by my village, and not to desert those few poor sheep in the wilderness. My daughters, too, must

stay with me; for, alas! I have no place of safety to which to send them."

"If you told me to leave you," returned Agatha, "it would be the first time in my life I ever wilfully disobeyed you; but I do not think you would have the heart to tell me so. Where can we be so safe as with you?"

"Well, my child, GOD has graciously ordered that we are not to be separated. Come, Rose; no tears! Sergeant Fletcher must not think that the family of one of CHRIST'S soldiers is less ready to look trouble or danger in the face, than one of this world's. I should be ashamed, when our Church is suffering so grievously, to dwell at ease, and have no share in Her afflictions: I should begin to fear, lest, forasmuch as we were not counted worthy to be fellow sharers of Her lot, and of that of Her Master here, we should not be partakers of it hereafter."

"But I know how the rebels have treated clergymen in other villages," said poor Rose, sobbing; "and if you should fall into their power, what would become of you?"

"Well, Rose, and what then? 'If ye be reproached for the name of CHRIST,'—go on with the text."

"'Happy are ye,'" answered Rose. "I know it is wrong, very wrong. I will try to behave like Agatha. There, sergeant Fletcher; you may look at me now; (for the sergeant had considerately turned away his head.) But tell us, how did you find out the news?"

"I heard this afternoon, from a farmer who had been at Northampton, that Fairfax's scoutmaster was there; and the report went, that the Roundheads would be there to-night. So I borrowed Farmer Downton's grey colt, and away directly. I could not get into the town—the crop-eared knaves know a trick worth two of that—and not having the password, I was like enough to have found gratis lodgings in Northampton gaol. But Fairfax is there, sure enough; and the magistrates presented him with the freedom of the town, or some such foolery, in a silver box: marry, the shell was better than the kernel. And Master Dell, beshrew him! was to preach,—to exercise, I should say,—in Peter's, as they call it, this evening."

"Well now, Fletcher," said Mr. Tresham, "you must often have been in situations like this, and I know we may depend on you. What can we do, by way of preparation, if the army should pass this village to-morrow?"

"Why, sir, God helps them that help themselves, as Prince Rupert used to say. For yourselves and the village you can do little enough: but for the church, you may, if you choose, do a great deal."

"How so?"

"If the Roundheads should come upon it as it is now, depend upon it, by this time to-morrow, there won't be an inch of stained glass left. I know how quick they are at any thing of the kind. And the great gilt screen will stand no chance, nor the pillars

either, I fear, unless something be done to them. However, they hate the glass most of all."

"But what in the world are we to do with it?" asked the rector.

"Take it out, sir, and bury it in some field hard by," replied the sergeant. "It will be there for years, and be none the worse at the end. And as to the pillars, if you whitewash them, and paint the screen, it may be they'll escape. But if not, I've seen enough of these things to know what will go with them."

"Whitewash that beautiful stone!" exclaimed Agatha; "why, one might as well break it up at once."

"Oh, no; a little scrubbing will soon set it to rights. I'll warrant you, sir, those pillars will be standing, when Fairfax, and that double-distilled knave, Cromwell, are hanged and forgotten."

"Your plan seems, I must confess, a sensible one," said Mr. Tresham. "But we have no time to lose, if we mean to do any thing to-night. Where are we to get whitewash?"

"Farmer Downton was just going to whitewash his new cottage, and there is plenty of lime and so forth lying about the premises. I'll go down and settle with him, if your honour will give me leave. He's true to the backbone; and with him, and me, and two or three more, we'll soon reform the church, almost as well as the Roundheads themselves could do it."

"Go, then, Fletcher, and see what you can get at once. You will find me in the church, whenever you come there."

As soon as the sergeant, proud to be of such importance, was gone, Mr. Tresham said, "John shall stay here with you while I am gone;—I dare say we shall not be very long. It is easy to destroy," he added, with a melancholy smile.

"Can I be of any use?" asked Agatha. "I would fain do all I could in so good a cause."

"No, my child," said Mr. Tresham; "this is not the night for you to face. All you can do to help the Church must be in the way of prayer."

After bidding his daughters good night, the rector, provided with a dark lantern, bent his way to the church. The storm was more furious than ever; the churchyard gate blew to with a noise which almost startled him; the wind moaned among the few headstones, and rustled in the long grass of the graves; and the vane on the tower creaked and screamed as it veered round to every quarter of the compass. The key turned with difficulty in the old massy lock; and Mr. Tresham, having closed the door, had full leisure to meditate on the present posture of affairs.

And no wonder if his thoughts took somewhat of a gloomy turn. Even in one of our churches, pewed and galleried as they now are, none but those who have tried it, can imagine the solemnity of an evening hour spent alone. And then, when only a few

carved oak seats filled the nave, and the light of the lantern shot dimly into the vast "valley" of the high-pitched roof, faintly discovering the angels, who seemed to guard the church with their outstretched wings, and the quaint carvings of hammer-beam and pendentive, and the sculptured wreaths of flowers which festooned the cornice; or, flashing on the rich dark windows, shadowed out the effigies of Bishops, and Saints, and warriors, and Virgin souls, each in its own delicate niche, all bearing the holy and heavenly repose wherewith our glass-stainers loved to invest their portraits; or fell on the carved Rood-screen, in all the glory of its painting and gilding; or, piercing into the Chancel, discovered the Altar, with its two candlesticks, emblems that CHRIST is "a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the glory of His people Israel:"—all these seemed indeed to bespeak the House of GOD and the gate of heaven. And with bitter feelings did the rector exclaim, "He that hewed timber aforetime out of the thick trees, was known to bring it to an excellent work: but now they break down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers." And, advancing to the Altar, he knelt down before its newly-erected rails, and poured out his soul in prayer for the poor Church in England; that GOD would be pleased, if it were His holy will, to shorten the time of Her trial, or to endue Her with patience and fortitude to support it; that He would direct the counsels and prosper the arms of the King; that He would restrain his armies from

running to any excess of riot; that He would bless his friends, and soften the hearts of his enemies. He prayed, too, for his own flock, with respect to the affliction which seemed to be coming on them; that none might fall away in time of persecution: and for his own family,—and earnestly did he beseech God to turn the heart of him who was engaged, if not in fighting for, at least in counselling, the rebels. He rose from prayer strengthened and refreshed, and walked up and down the church meditating on the 42nd Psalm, which seemed peculiarly applicable to the time and place. If he could say, "Now, when I think on these things, I pour out my heart by myself; for I went with the multitude, I brought them forth into the House of God, with the voice of joy and praise, among such as keep holyday;" he could also add, "Why art thou so cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God, for I shall yet praise Him." Some time had passed, when he heard the latch of the church door raised, and was well pleased to see Fletcher, Farmer Downton, and one or two others, whom he knew to be staunch churchmen, enter. They brought with them two buckets of limewash, a ladder, hammers and chisels, and two pieces of tarpauling, which the good farmer had taken from his haystacks, to their imminent detriment.

"You come on a sad errand, Mr. Churchwarden," said the rector to Farmer Downton, as he shook hands with him.

"Ay, ay, sir! God grant we may have the setting the mischief to rights ere long, which we shall do to-night."

"And now," said the rector, "as we are going to commence what looks so much like sacrilege, let us ask God's pardon for the necessity which is laid on us of profaning His Holy Temple, and His blessing in our endeavours to preserve the church and ourselves."

They knelt down, and Mr. Tresham offered up a brief but earnest petition. When they had risen, "Now, sir," said Sergeant Fletcher, who assumed the direction of affairs, "we have no time to lose. Master Downton, lend a hand with the ladder to the east window; we will look to that first. And do you, Tom Brown, set your bucket against this pillar, and whitewash it as fast as you can."

The ladder was fixed, and Fletcher, mounting it, began to take the glass out, keeping it, as far as possible, in the leads. The churchwarden stood on one of the lowest steps of the ladder, and handed it down to his other labourer, Will Sharp, who stood below, and deposited it safely in a large basket, or hamper, brought for that purpose. There was a representation of the Crucifixion in the central lights, with S. Mary and the beloved Apostle; the side lights were filled with various Saints, and above and below were the founder's arms. All the glass was removed in about half an hour; for Fletcher, in spite of his lame arm, worked well and cleverly; and the larger piece of tarpauling was then spread over the window to

keep out the rain, which had by this time begun to abate. The side windows were next dealt with after the same fashion, very little of the glass being injured; and by the time all was safely secured, the light began to dawn. The piers had by this time been thoroughly covered with lime, and their beauty so much disfigured that it was reasonable to hope they might escape. The same material speedily effaced the painting and gilding of the Roodscreen, and then Fletcher, looking up at the roof, said, "That the Roundheads may as well take down as we; for I could not move it, even if I had time, without spoiling it: but the Font-cover I think we may bestow somewhere out of the way."

"Put it in the loft of my great barn," said Farmer Downton; "no one will ever think of looking for it there."

"A bright thought, Mr. Churchwarden; so we will. But now, sir, if you will please to come with us, it will be as well that all of you should see where the glass is buried, that so, if so be one or more of us should die before it may be safely recovered, some of us may remain to point out the place of its concealment."

The whole party, therefore, adjourned to one of Farmer Downton's fields, where Fletcher, after hesitating for some little time, made choice of a dry ditch that bounded it on one side. He directed the men to dig in a particular part; and when the whole was covered, and rubbish thrown in to conceal the exca-

vation, he said, "Now, while this willow tree stands, you will remember that our treasure lies close to it; if it should be destroyed, you can take notice that the spot is twenty paces from the south-east corner of the field. I think we can hardly lose it; but one had need to be careful; for I know one or two places where the churchwardens hid the glass by themselves, and are dead since, and there is no knowledge where it is."

The Rouennaises have a complimentary proverb, with reference to one of their parish churches,—*Elle est belle comme les vitrailles de S. Patrice;* and somewhat of the same feeling prevailed amongst the inhabitants of Scaldwell, with respect to their little church. The outcry, therefore, raised on the following morning, when it was discovered that the whole of the glass was removed, was proportionate. A little crowd soon assembled in the churchyard, some bewailing the robbery, some execrating the hands which were guilty of it; all joining in wonder at the manner in which the deed was performed. The tarpauling waved sluggishly to and fro in the breeze; and when one or two climbed up to the window-sill, and drew it aside, the change in the interior of the church raised the popular indignation still higher.

"And what news, my masters?" said Sergeant Fletcher, as he joined the village rustics. "Why in the world are those windows covered with tarpauling?"

Five or six voices explained the matter together.

"Ay, ay," quoth the sergeant; "some of the Roundheads' doings, I warrant me; it's not the first glass they have made away with; marry, an things alter not for the better, it will not be the last."

"But, master sergeant," said one of the group, "this is not the way those folks generally go to work. Look you here! the panes have not been smashed, but carried away bodily; and there is not a broken piece to be seen inside or outside."

"And I could be sworn," said another, "that the panes were not removed from the outside: the man must have been within that did it."

"Besides," suggested a third, "who could have got to the pillars, to daub them over?"

Several ran to examine the church door, and found it locked. The sergeant marvelled at his own folly in not leaving it open; but said,

"Why, what could be easier than when some of the glass was moved, for the thief to get inside, and then finish the business? And who would have worked last night in the open air, if he could anyhow get under shelter?"

This explanation seemed generally satisfactory; but one shrewd fellow observed,

"Then, if they did it to harm the church, why put up the tarpauling to keep the wet out?"

"Perhaps," suggested Master Fletcher, driven to

his wit's end, "that was to prevent their lights—for lights they must have had—being seen."

No better solution offering itself, this was generally adopted; and the rector and churchwarden at the same time making their appearance, helped to pacify the people, and sent off to Kettering—Northampton being in the hands of the enemy—for white glass: Farmer Downton consenting that his tarpauling should remain to protect the church till the windows should be reglazed.

The day wore tediously away with the rector's family, who were in constant dread of a visit of some of the parliamentary forces. Several of the churches in Northampton were *purified;* and one of them, All Saints, so much injured, that it could never be used again; and was, after the Restoration, replaced by the great Grecian building which bears its name, and is most incongruously ornamented with a statue of King Charles the Second (who gave the timber necessary for the works), on the pediment of the portico. But the troops were confined to the town and its immediate suburbs, and not a soldier was seen in or near the village. The younger portion of the villagers, who had never seen an army, and were curious to behold for themselves that of which they had heard so much, were somewhat disappointed at this: the elder blessed God for having thus far preserved them unharmed.

CHAPTER III.

My son, of those old narrow ordinances
Let us not speak too lightly . . . .
The way of ancient ordinance, though it wind,
Is yet no devious way.—WALLENSTEIN.

THE course of our story now transports us to London, and introduces us to a character of whom we have hitherto heard little, and that little, unfavourable. Basil Tresham, the second son of Mr. Tresham, had been intended by his father for the law; and had, therefore, been sent, some few years before the period of which we write, to study in London. He had naturally been of a free and gay disposition; and, therefore, the surprise and sorrow of his family were great, when, after an absence of two years, he returned among them an altered man, gloomy, morose, and unsociable; taking no part in those old-fashioned hearty sports where he and his brother had formerly excelled, and acting as a complete check to the social schemes of enjoyment of which the good rector was a great admirer and deviser.

His father, in answer to his inquiries, could obtain nothing but vague and unsatisfactory answers: his sisters' half-surmises, half-questionings, were not a whit more successful; and Herbert's raillery only made him the more gloomy. Once only did he at all hint at the real cause of his changed manner and disposition; and that once was to Rose.

"What, more mistletoe brought in?" said he, one winter afternoon. "Will there never be an end of these fooleries?"

"Of these fooleries?" repeated Rose, in surprise. "Why, Basil, no one once entered more into them than yourself. It is Twelfth-night, you know."

"It is a bad way of celebrating our SAVIOUR'S Manifestation to the Gentiles,—keeping Twelfth-night, as you term it,—to pass the time in fooleries like these, meet only for the play-house, or like haunts of Satan, to the total forgetting why He was manifested in the flesh. It is a heathen custom, and very fit to be discouraged."

"But I do not see that we need forget why our LORD came on earth, because we celebrate a joyful time joyfully. The Church, you know, has always done so."

"The Church? The Romish Church, you mean: the mother of witchcrafts and all abominations: she that is drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs—she has, I know:—but what is she, that we should imitate her?"

"Well, well," said Rose, smiling, "I cannot argue with you; but there is, you know, a text, 'Rejoice

with them that do rejoice;' and that, I hope, you will remember to-night." And so the conversation ended.

On his return to London, Basil connected himself more and more closely with the party whom he had unfortunately been seduced to follow: he became acquainted with most of the popular puritan divines; and was closely ensnared by them before his father had any idea of his danger. But in one of his communications home, few and short in general, he mentioned in terms of great approbation, a sermon delivered by that godly and painful preacher, Master Henry Burton, who had just returned in triumph to London, from the imprisonment to which he had been sentenced by the Star-chamber, for libellous and seditious language. On receiving this notification, and hearing from other quarters of the rebellious spirit then generally pervading the London pulpits, Mr. Tresham lost no time in commanding his son's instant return: and after the delay of a week, received a long epistle setting forth, that after consulting with divers godly ministers, and true preachers of the word, they did all agree in testifying that as things then stood, for Basil to return to his father's house, would be a leaving of Canaan and going back again into Egypt, a becoming subject to ordinances, which all were to perish with the using: in short, an abiding in Meshech, and a dwelling among the tents of Kedar. The letter also set forth, that worthy Master Pym, being in need of a secretary, had offered him that post, and that he was forthwith to enter on its duties.

Mr. Tresham, on the receipt of this letter, entertained the idea of himself going to London, but was deterred by the danger which would have attended his appearance there, for he was somewhat of a marked man, and the consideration of what he owed to the other members of his family. He, therefore, despatched the following letter :—

" Son Basil,—Who or what kind of godly men they be that could give counsel to a son to disobey his father, as I know not, so I care not greatly to enquire. Yet have I heard of those who taught, ' If thou shalt say Corban, in whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his father and his mother, he shall be free :' also I have read that which was said of them, ' Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.' My will therefore is, that, on the receipt hereof, you repair home instantly; which failing to do you shall incur my heavy displeasure. So I rest

" Your affectionate but sorrowful Father,

" Herbert Tresham."

This letter almost prevailed on Basil to return; but happening to show it to Master Anthony Case, a then popular preacher with the House of Commons, he was so pressed with texts on the duty of giving up all things for the kingdom of heaven, of hating father and mother for Christ's Sake, and the like, that he determined on persisting in his former

resolution; and not being able to frame a suitable reply to his father's injunctions, he left them unanswered. At the setting up of the royal standard, when all men had to take a decided position on the side of rebellion or loyalty, he despatched a brief epistle to his father, setting forth, that he had cast his lot in with the saints, and must expect their tribulations in this world, as he hoped to share their glory in the next; and exhorting his family to follow his example. Since then, all communications between them had of course ceased; and Basil had only heard of his mother's death through circuitous channels.

For a time, he was well satisfied with the step he had taken. The monstrous crimes laid to the charge of many of the clergy in the petitions which poured in by shoals to Mr. Pym, convinced him that a Church, the lives of whose sons were so scandalous, could not be the Church of God. He saw or fancied he saw, that the lives of those with whom he associated were pure and irreproachable; he knew that oaths and profanity, and loose talking, unhappily too prevalent among the cavaliers, were carefully avoided by them: his patron in particular was exemplarily devout, would never take his place in Parliament without having attended a morning exercise, and kept the appointed fasts with extraordinary rigour. He had yet to learn that these men were like whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all

uncleanness. If at times he thought their language too strong, and their measures too precipitate, he reassured himself by referring to that part of Scripture which their preachers were never weary of quoting, the Book of Judges; and in the fearful vengeance taken by God on the idolatrous nations of Canaan, he seemed to trace out a parallel to the cruelties exercised by Parliament on the true and unflinching sons of the Church. He would sometimes reproach himself for his tender-heartedness; and tremble when he recollected the punishment inflicted on Saul, for not utterly destroying the Amalekites, and on Ahab, for sparing the life of Benhadad.

The first thing which somewhat shook his confidence in his new directors, occurred about six months previously to the time of which we write. Mr. Lenthall (whose secretary Basil became, on the death of Pym) was going down to the House, which then met about noon, and putting in the hands of his secretary a petition from Northamptonshire, with a long list of names, and another, to which no names were attached, directed that the latter should be substituted for the former, and the parchment, so amended, sent down after him to the House.

Basil, feeling interested in any thing which came from his native county, read the first petition attentively. He found its purport to be for a godly and preaching ministry: it contained nothing offensive in itself, and its whole tone of expression was much more gentle than that usually adopted in petitions of

a similar character. In looking over the names, he saw the signatures of some whose hands, he was certain, would never have been affixed to such a document at all, more especially when addressed to a body professedly in rebellion against its sovereign; among others, those of his father and eldest brother. He then read the other document which he was directed to substitute for this, and found it to be a most virulent composition, breathing the bitterest hatred to prelacy, as one of the rags of Antichrist: demanding the disuse of the surplice, the celebration of the Lord's Supper sitting, the abolition of the Cross in Baptism, and the ring in marriage; the suspension of all dumb-dogs, as it termed unpreaching ministers; and the speedy death of Laud. Basil's first impression was one of horror at the deceit; his next, that some mistake must have been made; and he determined on sending neither petition, but awaiting the return of the Speaker. Lenthall, however, sent a messenger for the document, and Basil, fully convinced that he should have his patron's thanks for detecting the mistake, put the original parchment, unaltered, into his hands.

Lenthall returned late, and in no placid mood.

"Master Tresham," said he, angrily, "how came it the petition I gave you was not substituted for that which you sent?"

"Worthy sir, because I deemed there must be some mistake."

"Some mistake! there was indeed! Why, all

the names I had collected with so much labour were appended to a petition of straw! Some mistake! Why, when I pressed for the reading, nothing doubting that it would have preached the House a rare sermon, that befel me which happened unto godly Aaron,—there came out this calf. Some mistake! And where should the mistake be?"

"I thought, worthy sir, that it savoured of deceit to put the names of those who subscribed one petition under another, of which perchance they might not have approved."

"Ah, brother!" returned Lenthall, softening, for he was not naturally a hasty man, "I forgot that thou art but just free from prelatical darkness, and knowest not as yet the glorious liberty of the saints. Did not Rahab deceive the messengers, and was it not counted to her for a praise? Did not the godly midwives lie unto Pharaoh, and yet they were rewarded of God?"

"But," argued Basil, encouraged by his patron's mildness, "is it not written, Do not evil that good may come?"

"Yea," answered Lenthall; "but that, as it was well expounded by worthy Master Burton last sabbath, is to be understood with a limitation. For *evil* there signifieth not absolutely evil, but evil of an heinous kind; and *good* signifieth not good in itself, but good that is of little worth. So that Paul saith there, Do not great evil, for the sake of gaining little good. Moreover, they to whom he wrote, yea, he himself,

were in the oldness of the letter; and not to be accounted patterns, in that particular, for us who are free."

Basil had, in his younger years, been a great reader of plays; and a line from a drama he had formerly admired rushed into his mind: "The devil can quote Scripture for his purpose;" but he instantly rejected it, as a suggestion of the evil one himself.

This event, though for a time it somewhat shook Basil Tresham's confidence, that the cause of his friends was the cause of God, soon ceased to give him any uneasiness; for the habit of imagining that the end justifies the means became easy by practice. But frauds of a more heinous nature even than the last were frequently suspected, even if they could not be said to be proved, by Basil. Clergymen, whom he well knew to be of the most exemplary character, were accused by their parishioners as well of malignity and disaffection to the Parliament, as of scandalous life and manners: and these accusations were made the ground of summoning them before the House, or appointing a lay commission to sit upon them in their own parish. Were we to believe the various charges on which the suffering clergy of England were condemned, in many cases, unheard, we should have to confess that men of more dissolute and abandoned lives never disgraced any Church; whereas, in reality, for eminent holiness and purity, no set of clergy, since the days of the Primitive Church, had ever surpassed our own. Basil was

well acquainted with White, the chairman of the Committee of Ejectment, and the author of *The Century of Scandalous Ministers;* and could not but be shocked with the eagerness of that Puritan in snatching at any scandal, however ill-authenticated, and in omitting any palliating or justifying circumstance, however well attested. He was also pained beyond measure at the manner in which Prynne published Archbishop Laud's journal, professedly for the purpose of exciting popular indignation against him: the suppression or insertion of negatives, and the like, which are every where to be found in it. Still, he thought, a good cause has often been carried on by bad instruments; yet, it must be confessed, his zeal for the cause having been principally founded on the opinion he entertained of the personal piety of its promoters, with his belief of the latter his confidence in the former speedily declined. He contrasted the long, irreverent, garrulous, prayers of Case, or Knewstubb, or Spurstow, or Calamy, with the sober, earnest, devotion of the Liturgy to which he had been accustomed; their furious and bloodthirsty harangues, with the "peace to men of peace," which his father had been used to announce.

Such was the state of things when the trial of Laud commenced; and Basil, with the leave of his patron, was a patient hearer of it day by day. He listened with silent admiration to that wonderful defence, the most wonderful, perhaps, that ever fell from the lips of a prisoner, and imagined that his enemies could

never have the heart to proceed. However, though he perceived that such was their intention, when the Archbishop, being asked why the sentence should not be passed upon him, produced the King's pardon, sealed with the great seal of England, and strangers were ordered to withdraw, he imagined that the debate which ensued would only be on the proper method, under the circumstances, of allowing the pardon; and returned, well satisfied, to his office. Unspeakable, therefore, was his astonishment to hear that an ordinance had passed condemning the Archbishop *to be hanged;* and it required all his self-command not to express his opinion of the measure in terms which would have endangered himself without benefiting him whom he would have wished to serve. The punishment was afterwards, on the Archbishop's earnest petition, commuted to beheading, not without great opposition on the part of his persecutors.

The evening before the execution (Wednesday, Jan. 9, 1644-5), Tresham was directed by Mr. Lenthall to visit the Archbishop with an offer of spiritual consolation from two of the Presbyterian divines. It was a bitterly cold evening; and as Basil passed the desecrated Cross at Charing (not caring on such an evening to venture by water), and walked as quickly as he might along the deserted Strand, melancholy indeed were his recollections and anticipations. He thought of the happy group,—happy, if not absolutely, at least comparatively,—then assembled round his father's hearth; and contrasted his sad errand

with the peace that dwelt there. The snow fell thick and fast; and as he waited at Temple-bar for admission, his thoughts turned more than ever on the possibility of returning and claiming his father's forgiveness, even as the Prodigal Son, and again mingling with the friends of his childhood. As he passed Tower Hill, there was the sound of axes and busy hammers and voices; and looking up, he beheld the scaffold on which the morrow's tragedy was to be acted. He gladly hastened by it, and on presenting his credentials at the Tower-gate, was ushered by the lieutenant himself across the cheerless court and along the gloomy passages to the prisoner's chamber. The officer having announced a messenger from worshipful Master Lenthall, left the apartment.

The Archbishop was, as was his wont, walking up and down the room with quick decisive steps: on the table were pens and ink, and some written sheets, containing the speech which he intended to deliver on the morrow. He stopped short as Basil was announced, and seemed to enquire his message.

"I am come," said Tresham, after a pause, "to offer your Grace the services of Dr. Marshall, or Dr. Calamy, or any of the other orthodox divines now in London, to prepare you for to-morrow's trial."

Time was that such a message from such a quarter would grievously have discomposed the Archbishop; as it was, after repeating to himself his favourite text, "Usquequo, Domine, usquequo?" he answered,

"I am right willing to believe that the message was meant kindly, and, therefore, I thank Master Lenthall for it; but yet methinks he might have known that by offering me my own chaplain, Dr. Sterne, he should have done me greater service. As it is, if I may have his services, I shall be the more bounden to you; if not, I must even be content with my own; for small consolation could I find in the ghostly comfort of a schismatic."

"I will do your message to Master Lenthall, my Lord," said Basil; "and I hope your Grace will believe that it will not be my fault if it be not answered as it should be."

"You do an unkind office but too kindly, young man," said Laud. "What is your name? I would fain know it."

"Basil Tresham, if it please your Grace."

"Tresham! Tresham!" said the Archbishop, who never forgot a name. "Art thou any relation to the good old rector of Scaldwell, Master Herbert Tresham?"

Basil answered in a low voice, "I am his son."

"His son! and consorting with rebels and schismatics! A sorry day must this be for thy father, young man. And what saith he to this thy course of life?"

Basil made no reply.

The Archbishop looked at him,—and the tears were standing in his eyes. He paused, and said kindly, "It is never too late to return to God's

Church. Go back, go back to thy father's house, and say to him,—Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;—so shall you be accepted both of your earthly and your Heavenly Father."

The lieutenant here entered with a servant, bearing supper. The Archbishop continued, "Master Tresham, if you have no more pressing business, perhaps you will share with me the last supper I shall ever need. Master Lieutenant, cause them to set on two more trenchers, and do you yourself join us."

Laud's conversation during supper was more than calm, it was cheerful. He talked with interest of the negociations then pending; and expressed his confident hope that all would be ordered for the best. When supper was over, and his guests rose to go, he said, "Master Lieutenant, see there be a cup of wine for me on Tower Hill to-morrow. Methinks it will be a cold morning; and I would not have my enemies say that I shivered through fear. And now, Master Tresham, good night. Think, I pray you, of what I have said; and, if it might be so, I would fain have you near me to-morrow. By God's grace, you shall see that a Prelate may meet death like a Christian, whatever William Prynne—God forgive him as I do!—hath written, or said, to the contrary."

"I will surely be there," answered Tresham; "and I pray God to support and strengthen your

Grace; and I humbly beseech your Grace's blessing."

The Archbishop gave it; and Basil, leaving the Tower, made the best of his way to Westminster, where he pleaded so well, that Dr. Sterne, the same who afterwards filled the Chair of York, was allowed free access to the Archbishop on the following morning.

Basil had some acquaintance with Hinde, the short-hand writer employed on the occasion. By his interest he obtained permission to be on the scaffold. Early as it was when he arrived there, Tower Hill was thronged; every window and housetop commanding a view of the spot was crowded to excess; and a band of soldiers was drawn up on each side the scaffold, but not immediately round it. The stillness observed by the populace was most striking; and a remarkable contrast to the yells and groans which had saluted Laud on his way to the Tower. If a laugh were any where heard, it was instantly hushed, as desecrating the solemnity of the scene; and men spoke to each other in a low voice, or in whispers, as if afraid to disturb the silence. A little before eleven o'clock, the executioner and his assistant appeared, with a basket of sawdust, which they sprinkled round the block; and shortly afterwards the Martyr, with Dr. Sterne, slowly and calmly ascended the scaffold. There were present, beside Basil, Hinde, the short-hand writer, the lieutenant of the Tower, Marshall, the Presbyterian, and Sir

John Clotworthy, a Devonshire knight. Laud recognized Basil with a smile, and coming over to the side where he was, began to address the people. "This," he said, "is an uncomfortable time to preach in, yet I will begin with a text of Scripture:—'Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of our faith.' I," he continued, "have been long in my race; and how I have looked unto JESUS, He best knows. I am now come to the end of my race, and here I find the cross, a death of shame; but the shame must be despised, or no coming to the right hand of GOD. JESUS despised the shame for me; and GOD forbid I should not despise the shame for Him. I am going apace," he proceeded, "towards the Red Sea, and my feet are on the very brink of it; an argument, I hope, that GOD is bringing me into the Land of Promise; for that was the way through which He led His people." Then, after glancing at the malice of his enemies, and alluding to the natural shrinking from a violent death, which he could not but feel, he proceeded more cheerfully, —"I know my GOD, Whom I serve, is as able to deliver me from this sea of blood, as He was the Three Children from the furnace. And, I most humbly thank my SAVIOUR for it, my resolution is as their's was: they would not worship the image which the king had set up, nor will I the imaginations which this people are setting up. Nor will I forsake the Temple and Truth of GOD, to follow the

bleating of Jeroboam's calves in Dan and in Bethel." He proceeded to notice the "great clamour raised, that he should have brought in popery;" and proved admirably that "the pope had never such an harvest since the Reformation, as he hath upon the sects and divisions that are now among us." After this, having mentioned the king, and the city of London, he went on:—"The third particular is, the poor Church of England. It hath flourished, and been a shelter to other neighbouring Churches when storms have driven upon them. But alas! now it is in a storm itself; and GOD only knows whether, or how, it shall get out. And, which is worse than a storm from without, it has become like an oak cleft to shivers with wedges made out of its own body, and at every wedge profaneness and irreligion are pouring in." He then spoke of himself,—his innocence of the crime for which he was to die, however grievous a sinner in other respects; and concluded, by asking the people to join with him in prayer. Every word of this beautiful sermon went to Basil's heart; and when it was finished, and Laud knelt in prayer, he followed him earnestly. Sir John Clotworthy, referring to the flush which, from the excitement of speaking, was on the Martyr's cheek, said, in an audible whisper, "Lo you there! the son of Belial hath painted his face!" "I pray you peace," returned Basil; "if you cannot comfort, do not insult." And a full refutation of this wretched calumny was given when the Archbishop's head was held up by

the executioner to the people; it was then as pale as ashes. As soon as he rose, Clotworthy tauntingly asked him, "What is the comfortablest saying a dying man can have?" and the Archbishop calmly replied, "Cupio dissolvi et esse cum CHRISTO—I have a desire to depart and to be with CHRIST." But as the other continued his interruption, he turned to the executioner; and observing through the crevices of the scaffold, which had been hastily and imperfectly put together, a crowd of people, he desired they might be removed, "lest," as he continued, "my innocent blood should fall upon their heads." This took some little time, and Laud, turning to the lieutenant, said, "I pray you let me have an end of this misery; I have borne it over long." With that, putting off his doublet, he knelt by the block, and said:—

"LORD, I am coming as fast as I can. I know I must pass through the shadow of death, before I can come to see Thee. But it is but *umbra mortis*, a mere *shadow* of death, a little darkness upon nature; but Thou, through Thy Merits and Passion, hast broke through the jaws of death. So, LORD, receive my soul, and have mercy upon me; and bless this land with peace and charity, that there may not be this effusion of Christian blood among them, for JESUS CHRIST His sake, if it be Thy will." At last, after a pause, he continued, "Lord JESUS, receive my spirit!" and Tresham turned away his head. There needed no second blow, for the executioner was well

skilled in his miserable trade, and was the same who, four years later, beheaded the King. It was noted of him, that he afterwards died raving, under circumstances of peculiar horror.

Understanding that the Archbishop was to be buried in All Hallows, Barking, a church of his own patronage and jurisdiction, and determining to follow him to the grave, Basil kept close to the coffin. On arriving, followed by an enormous crowd, near the south door of that church, a halt was made by the brave friends who bore the coffin; and though it was high treason to use any part of the Church service, Dr. Sterne advanced from the inside, in surplice, scarf, and hood, with the Prayer-book in his hands, and began those sublime words,—"*I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the* LORD; *he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die.*" The crowd instinctively removed their hats, and such as were nearest pressed into the church, where the service was solemnly concluded, and the Archbishop quietly committed to his temporary resting-place.

That Romanists should deny the claim of Archbishop Laud to the title of Martyr, is of course only what might be expected. That Dissenters should denounce his memory, is equally natural. But that professing members of the Church should join with them in condemning one who, during a life of seventy years, laboured for Her welfare, who sacrificed all he had for Her good, and who cheerfully and wil-

lingly laid down his life for Her, proves only the lamentable power which prejudice and a sectarian spirit have in darkening the understanding, and the want of charity which devotion to *a party* involves.

"We need not mourn for thee, here laid to rest,
Earth is thy bed, and not thy grave; the skies
Are for thy soul the cradle and the nest;
There live, for here thy glory never dies;
For, like a Christian Knight and champion blest,
Thou didst both live and die: now feed thine eyes
With thy Redeemer's sight; where crown'd with bliss
Thy faith, zeal, merit, well-deserving is."

FAIRFAX'S *Tasso*, iii. 68.

The whole scene made so deep an impression on the mind of Basil, that had he been able to obtain leave of absence, he would have left London instantly; but while waiting for a convenient time, he was seized with an illness which held him for many weeks on the brink of the grave. When he began to recover, his amendment was so slow, that it was the beginning of June before he was able to take his usual exercise; and in that time he had ample space to mourn over his unspeakable guilt and folly, in forsaking the guide of his youth, and to form serious resolutions of returning to the good old ways for the future.

One morning, at the time to which our story has already arrived, while he was meditating on the best and speediest way of making his escape from a city where he had so grievously erred, he was summoned

by Lenthall, who, after congratulating him on his recovery, proceeded, "Master Tresham, I doubt not that the country air will be a better physician than the leech. We have tidings that Fairfax is at Northampton, and seeketh occasion to fight against the malignants, even as Abner the son of Ner did, when he said unto Joab, 'Let the young men arise and play before us.' Now, the Commons think it not good to stake so much on a single throw; and you are to bear dispatches to the general with that import. Will you undertake the mission?"

Basil's joy was too great to allow of his speaking; but he bowed in token of acquiescence.

"Be ready then early to-morrow morning," said Lenthall; "your place shall be supplied meanwhile." And with these words he bade him farewell.

CHAPTER IV.

"When storms are seen, wise men put on their cloaks;
When great leaves fall, then winter is at hand;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?
All may be well with us; but if it be,
'Tis more than I expect, or we deserve."

RICHARD III.

THE royal army had taken up its head-quarters at Daventry; and there, from want of information with respect to the enemy's movements, four days were lost,—four precious days; which, had they been properly employed, might have put a happy termination to the war. On Friday, the thirteenth of June, information was at length received that Sir Thomas Fairfax was at Northampton; the army instantly fell back on Harborough, the intent of the King being to draw together fresh forces from Newark and other places. His present army consisting of less than eight thousand men, appeared to him too small a force to stake a kingdom's fate on. That evening,

however, intelligence was received that Fairfax had advanced to Naseby, a village not more than six miles from Harborough; and a council of war was summoned to debate the propriety of instant battle. This council was still sitting; the greatest eagerness prevailed in the army as to its decision; it was reported that voices had been loud and high in debate; and though two or three hours had elapsed since the tent was closed, nothing had as yet transpired.

"Trelawney," said Colonel Tresham, who was walking up and down with that officer near the royal tent, and awaiting the issue, "however this matter may end, I have a mind this evening to gallop over to Scaldwell; we cannot be twelve miles thence; and it may be months before I have the like opportunity."

"Have with you," replied Colonel Trelawney, "if you do: I am as anxious as you can be to see the place and its fair mistress once more. We shall have to look well to ourselves at the enemy's outposts, which must lie between us and it."

"Fortunately," said Herbert, "I have just learnt the pass-word from a deserter, who has come in to my regiment; so we are prepared for the worst."

"That is well," remarked the other. "How low the sun is getting! This council will never break up. I hope they will decide the right way."

"You mean for battle," said Tresham. "Well, I scarcely know; there is much to be said on both sides."

"Why, when *can* we fight better than now, when the army is flushed with its success at Leicester and Hawkesley House, and the Roundheads dispirited by their bad fortune at Oxford and Borstall, and not half-confident in their general, who is scarce gone far enough in villany to serve their turn?"

"You should also recollect," observed Herbert, "that were we to delay only for a week, our force would be doubled, and Fairfax's diminished by desertion."

"Against which," argued Trelawney, "it is to be remembered, that Sir Thomas would, in that case, probably fall back on London, and so escape us."

"He might, certainly," said his friend; "but, you must allow, he does not show any great token at present of wishing to avoid us. If we do fight, it will, after all, be his doing more than ours."

"He probably thinks it must be now or never; for, if he were to retreat again, his character would be ruined with his masters. Still, better retreat than be beaten; and so, methinks, Master Fairfax would judge, if we received any considerable reinforcement."

"We have heard little enough about him," remarked Herbert; "he may be superior to us, for aught we can tell to the contrary. And I further doubt whether a soul in the army knows the exact spot where, at this present moment, he may be."

"That we are like enough to discover for ourselves," answered the other, "and pretty soon too,

if this tedious council would but end. And, by my faith! it is over—they are leaving the king's tent. Now, how will it be?" he continued, as Prince Rupert came towards them.

"You will be glad to hear, gentlemen," said the Prince, "that we are to fight to-morrow. Marry, some cowards among us, beshrew them, would have let the knaves escape: but I warrant me we have them now: and call me coward too, if they play fast and loose any more."

Colonel Tresham, after expressing his pleasure, continued, "I was about to ask your Highness leave of absence for a few hours, to visit my family, who live not many miles hence."

"With all my heart," rejoined Rupert, who was in high good humour at having had things his own way; "with all my heart; only don't get taken prisoner; we cannot spare you to-morrow. And you, Colonel Trelawney?"

"I was about to make the same request to your Highness."

"What! your family do not reside near here also?"

"Not exactly so," please your Highness—but"—

"His future family, and my present one," interrupted Herbert, smiling.

"Oh, oh!" said the Prince, "that is the arrangement, is it? The king will lose a good officer, Trelawney, the day that sees you married. Well, take care of yourselves, gentlemen; and remember the word for to-night is *Victory*."

In half an hour the friends were urging on their horses at a rapid pace for Brixworth. Their conversation at first turned on the probable event of the morrow; but the loveliness of the evening, and the stillness of the scene, gave it a different turn: and they spoke of Agatha. Trelawney was indulging his fancy with a picture of the time when the troubles should be over, and the King restored, and he himself introducing his bride to the beauties of his Cornish domain; and his friend was sometimes smiling at the fair picture he sketched, sometimes sighing to think it might never be realized, when they entered a narrow lane winding to the south of the high ground of Naseby.

"I more than suspect," said Herbert, "that the enemy is not very far to our left; there are several circumstances which make me think so; and it would be a good safe position, to which Master Fairfax, I imagine, has as little objection as most men. But, if it be so, we shall probably fall in with some of their patroles ere long."

"On my honour, I believe you are right," said Trelawney, as they came to a sharp turning in the lane, and saw, at the distance of about twenty yards before them, a soldier, pacing to and fro.

"Who goes there?" said the man, presenting his piece.

"Friends," answered Colonel Tresham.

"The word, friends," said the other.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON," replied Herbert.

"All's well. Good night!" replied the soldier.

"By my faith, Tresham," said his companion, "that was a narrow escape. We should have been hardly put to it, had you not been lucky enough to pick up that piece of information. You must be right in thinking them on that height; how call you it?"

"Naseby Down," said his friend. "Ah! many a time I have watched the sun setting behind it from my father's house, long before I thought of all the troubles that have since come upon us."

"The Prince will find it no easy matter to dislodge the Roundheads from their position, I fear: it is the first soldier-like choice Fairfax has made."

Occasional remarks of this kind served to while away the road till the two friends reached the village of Brixworth. On entering it, the first glance showed that it was in the hands of the rebels. One of the two hostels, which bore the name of the "GOD encompasseth us," since degenerated into the "Goat and Compasses," was filled with sturdy troopers; some of whom were drinking their black-jacks of ale at the long settle in the common room, and others reposing themselves on low benches placed for their use outside the bow-window, which being thrown open, was no obstacle to conversation with those within. The landlord seemed in high favour with those

zealots, and was discussing boldly and freely the chances of the Philistines being delivered into their hands on the morrow. The other hostel, called the George and Dragon, had fared much worse; the obnoxious sign had been taken down, and the landlord somewhat roughly treated, and confined in one of his own cellars, which had first, however, been completely emptied of sundry ale casks, and bottles of rare old wine; the consumption of which made the time pass pleasantly enough to the guests whom he was most unwillingly entertaining.

The two officers had taken the precaution of putting on the sad coloured Genevan cloak and falling ruff, generally adopted by the Puritans, and they therefore fearlessly rode up to water their horses at the first mentioned inn.

The sergeant who commanded the party immediately entered into conversation with them, and in answer to his inquiries was told that they had lately arrived from Worcestershire, and were on their way north, on private business. His party, he said in return, was quartered at Brixworth that evening; but were to join the main body early on the following morning. "If," he continued, "you would fain see a godly reformation, while your horses are a baiting, and would walk up to yonder steeple-house, which men call the church, you would see Corporal Pye hard at work there. The best hand is the corporal, in the kingdom, at purifying the house of Baal: even

like Jehoiada, who brake down his temple, and slew Mattan his priest on the altar."

"Gramercy for your advice," said Tresham, "I would fain look on the matter myself."

"I would go with you," continued the sergeant "but I dare not leave the house to-night. Right godly professors are our men, but a little over addicted to creature comforts. Here, Master Mumble-prayers," he added, addressing a poor man who stood near, and was evidently listening with disgust and consternation, (he had formerly been parish clerk) "show these worthy gentlemen up to the church, as you call it."

"Do so, my good fellow," said Trelawney, "and I will bestow something on you for your pains."

Brixworth church lies at some little distance west of the village. It is probably the most ancient now existing in the kingdom: one of the few links yet left between us and the Anglo-Saxon Church, which seem to prove, that whether in Her primitive simplicity, under S. Alphege, and S. Cuthbert, and S. Bede, in Her increase of outward splendor, yet decline of inward purity, in the age of the Plantagenets, in Her sufferings at the Reformation, in Her temporary downfall at the Rebellion, in the sin of the Revolution, or the deadness of the eighteenth, or the revival of the nineteenth century, the Church of England has ever been one and the same.

"Have you lived long in the parish?" asked

Tresham of his guide, by way of opening a conversation with him.

"Seventy-four years, man and boy, come next Midsummer, sir," he answered; "and forty of them have I been parish clerk."

"You must have seen some sad changes in that time," remarked Herbert.

"That I have, sir; and this last the worst of all. But mayhap your honours are on the side of the Parliament, and I may get into trouble for speaking my mind. Howsoever, you don't seem as if you would do a mischief to a poor old man."

"Make yourself quite comfortable about us, father," said Trelawney; "we detest the doings of these scoundrels as much as you can do. 'God and King Charles!' that's our motto."

"God bless your honours! I thought you looked to be honest men. Ah, well-a-day! it would have made your hearts bleed to see the goings on at the Parsonage this last week. And yet all the while the villains talked of doing God's work."

"Tell us all about it," said Herbert. "Who was your parson?"

"Parson Towgood, sir; and a better and kinder man there is not in the county, be the other who he may. And there was Madam Towgood,—God rest her soul!—just such another; but she is dead and gone, and taken away from the evil to come. Last Tuesday there came down a messenger from London, with orders to take our parson up there directly, to

be tried for his crimes; marry, what they were might have puzzled a wiser head than any that hated him had. Well, sir, it was late at night, and very stormy: Parson Towgood was ill, and in bed, and the doctor was with him. The messenger comes to the door, and brings orders to take him up before Parliament without a moment's delay. It would have moved the Great Turk's heart to see pretty Mistress Agnes: how she wrung her hands and begged them to leave her father only that one night; the doctor, too, said that to move him would be as much as his life was worth. 'Twas all the same to the Roundheads,—have him they would, and must. Mistress Agnes begged hard to be taken too; and after much ado, she had her own way; so the poor old gentleman was had off on horseback to Northampton,—and what has become of him since I know not."

"Well, my good friend," said Trelawney, "you may live to see him back yet,—and I hope you will. Hold, there's a carolus for you. 'Tis a sad thing to be out of employment at your time of life."

"God bless and reward your honour! I hope he may come back; but I never expect to live to see it. However, that's all one, so it really comes to pass."

The scene which presented itself to the eyes of the two friends, on entering the church, was one well calculated to prove into what depths of iniquity those who have emancipated themselves from the yoke of

the Church are ever ready to fall. In the Aisles of the church some twenty horses were tethered, a temporary partition having been run up from the piers to the wall, of rough deal boards, so as to form several separate stalls. The Nave was filled with troopers,—some laughing, some jesting, some swearing, some drinking, some quarrelling, some sitting round a fire made out of the beautiful fragments of the Roodscreen. At the entrance of the Chancel, several, and among them Corporal Pye, were amusing themselves by shooting at the effigy of our Crucified LORD, which hung in the great eastern window: they had already shivered every other fragment of stained glass, and reserved this for their last and profanest mockery. The organ, richly gilded and ornamented, had been broken up, and some of the soldiers were making discordant noises on its shattered pipes.

The two officers looked at each other without speaking. The poor clerk sat down on the rifled parish chest, and wept like a child. The last rays of the sun streamed in through the dismantled south-western windows, on the wreck of beautiful carving, shattered mullions, broken oak seats, and defaced capitals, showing here and there a fragment of some rich deep moulding, calculated to afford that wonderful play of light and shade, which only the artists of ancient times knew how to give; and lighting up the faces of the church-destroyers as they gloated over the ruin, made it seem, instead of the House

of GOD, a Pandemonium. In one corner, a soldier was breaking up a disrobed brass, which bore the effigies of a knight and his lady, great benefactors, each with the hands clasped in prayer,—he with the lion, the emblem of courage, she with the hound, symbolizing faithfulness, at the feet. Neither the gratitude due to these departed worthies, nor the sanctity of the place, nor the beauty of the workmanship, could preserve this memorial; for the legend began, "Of yowre charite praye ffor the sowles"—and ended, "on whoos sowles and all Crysten sowles Jhu have mercy." Another soldier, armed with a long pole, was striking off the bosses from the roof of the aisles: "they contained," he observed, "some awful papistry;"—on some were sculptured the letters, Ihc, on others, Xps; on others again, the Holy Lamb, or the Pelican "in her piety." These were all thrown into the fire as fast as they fell. On the outside of the church might be heard the sound of hammers busily engaged; the lead was being stripped off, under the direction of a pious plumber from Northampton.

"What would the founder of this church have felt," said Herbert at length, "could he have foreseen its ruin? Think of the generations that have little by little added to its beauty; the gladness which filled their hearts when they saw their gifts adding comeliness to the building: their joy in the thought that, 'not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister these things;' the self-denial and faith

in which the building was reared,—and all to be destroyed in a single hour!"

"It is impossible," returned his friend, "that this state of things should continue. God must and will avenge His own cause: whether we shall be His instruments therein, I know not; but it will indeed be a blessed work."

"A blessed work, indeed, my masters!" said the corporal, who had now destroyed the Holy Effigy at which he was aiming, and came forward in time to catch the last words. "A blessed reformation of popish and prelatical mummery have we lived to see."

Tresham bowed; he dared not trust his voice; and he and Trelawney instantly left the church.

"Well," said the corporal, "that's what I can't understand. Tom Henderson, know you who those strangers are?"

"Not I, corporal; sons of Heth, I much fear me; for they did not seem to enter into our good work like true Protestants."

"I wish you would follow them, and note whither they are bound; it may much concern us."

"Wait half a second," said Henderson, "till I have settled with this fellow;" dealing at the same time a tremendous blow on the face of a priest, carved in alabaster, the canopy of which he had been previously mutilating.

The clerk took advantage of the delay, and leaving the church quickly, ran down the hill after the two

officers. "For the love of heaven, gentlemen," he said, "take care of yourselves. They suspect you up at the church, and will follow you! God bless you for your kindness to me! I dare not stay longer with you."

So saying, he crept through a hedge at the side of the lane, and disappeared. Tresham and his friend, after a brief consultation, came to the conclusion that, under such circumstances, to prosecute their intended journey would be most ill-advised; and, accordingly, having called for their reckoning, they rode off at a quick pace for Harborough, before Henderson had completed his work of devastation.

CHAPTER V.

"They may boast of their Fairfax, their Waller, and all
The roundheaded rebels of Westminster Hall;
But tell these bold traitors of London's proud town
That the spears of the north have encircled the crown."

ROKEBY.

THE morning of the eventful fourteenth of June broke beautifully and calmly over our village, and seemed to promise a bright blue summer day. The rector, who had slept but little, walked out early in his garden,—a piece of ground laid out with no small care in the formal fashion of the age. He pondered on the strange contrast between the quiet of the spot where he stood, and the uproar which, as he well knew, must be going on at the distance of a few short miles. He wondered, too, whether his son would be engaged in the action which (there could be no doubt) would that day take place, and whether he would be restored safely again to his home. While engaged in such thoughts, he heard the tram-

pling of a horse at the garden-gate, and Sergeant Fletcher, alighting from it, wished him a good morning and a fortunate day.

"And whither bound, Sergeant Fletcher?" asked the clergyman. "You seem setting out on a journey."

"Down to Naseby, sir, down to Naseby; they will meet there. The rebels know their position too well to think of leaving it; and the Prince will never be satisfied without a stroke at them. If I can get any news there, you shall have it as soon as may be. The enemy, you see, lie between us and the king, or I would have been in the camp before now; howsoever, I may chance to pick up something, and I mean to be there betimes."

"Take care of yourself, Fletcher; remember how important your life is to us all."

"Ay, ay, sir; its not the first time I've been among the Roundheads. As the day gets on, sir, I would keep pretty much in-doors, for there are sure to be stragglers about, who may be after no good. Whatever happens, I hope to bring you some news before long."

"God grant you prove a happy messenger!" said the rector.

"Amen, sir," replied the sergeant. "I expect to drink the King's health to-night with a lighter heart than I have these many months past." And with these words he rode off.

In the mean time, all was bustle and activity in the

royal army. Tresham and Trelawney were both summoned early in the morning to a general meeting of officers, in Prince Rupert's tent, where the plan arranged was laid before them. The King, who had been against immediate battle, was there, and in extraordinary spirits,—a circumstance so unusual with him that several of the bystanders drew thence an unhappy omen for the day's success: the belief of the times being general, that such an unnatural and exuberant flow of spirits was a presage of impending death or misfortune; much as the Scotch at the present day call the man who exhibits them "fey," and consider the presage as most certain.

However, when the party issued forth, all other thoughts were lost in the beauty and excitement of the spectacle. The army was mustered on a rising ground, about a mile south of Harborough. There was not a cloud to speck the clear blue sky; and a light breeze from the south-west rendered the air cool and fresh. Here and there, where the ground broke away, and afforded a peep into the blue distance, a village spire might be seen; and the tower of Market Harborough was distinctly visible on the left. At the lower part of the rise, the army was drawn up in three divisions; the central body, commanded by Lord Ashley, consisted of about 1500 foot; the right was commanded by Prince Rupert, and contained 2000 horse; the left was made up of all the northern and Newark horse, which however did not amount to 1600, and was led by Sir Marma-

duke Langdale. At the very summit of the hill was posted the reserve: it consisted of the royal life-guards, Prince Rupert's regiment of foot, and the Earl of Lichfield's horse, in all about 1300. By an old blasted oak (long after called the King's Oak) stood a small groupe, consisting of the King and the principal officers, and at a short distance from them, the great standard of England floated idly in the summer breeze.

"And now, gentlemen," said the king, "to your posts. If the enemy does not advance to meet us, we must look for him. But, nephew, above all things, we charge you, no rashness. Colonel Tresham, we shall desire your company: it may be we may have that which will employ you. The rest know where to bestow themselves."

Colonel Tresham was accordingly left, nearly alone, with King Charles, who from time to time put some indifferent questions to him. At last, as it grew towards nine o'clock, he said,

"Think you it not somewhat strange, Colonel Tresham, that we have heard no tidings of the rebels?"

"So please your Majesty, the scout master might be sent forward to make his report; and we might then have sure advice by which to advance."

Order was accordingly given; and a long and inactive half-hour succeeded, during which the King seemed to grow more and more depressed. At last he said,

"I would fain hope better things, Tresham, for my

country's sake: for my own, I would not care if it were so: but I cannot shake off the presentiment that this is the last time I shall ever see so gallant a host under my banner."

"Your Majesty must not give way to such gloomy thoughts: God has blessed the good cause in a marvellous manner during the whole of this campaign; and I will not believe He is about to desert it now."

"And yet," replied the King, "is there not something almost prophetic in the gloom which often oppresses us without any assignable reason? Did you ever chance to hear that which befel me and Lord Falkland of a like kind?"

Herbert answered in the negative.

"We were in the Bodleian library at Oxford, and I was much in the mood which now holds me. Seeing a Virgil lie open on the table, I bethought me—God forgive me for so tampering with futurity!—of consulting the Virgilian lots; and wot you the passage on which I lighted?

——'Jacet ingens litore truncus
Avulsumque humeris caput, et sine nomine corpus.'"

"It was certainly a singular sentence," remarked Herbert; "but it were more fitting that your Majesty should look on it as one of those singular coincidences, which to attempt to explain were useless, and which perhaps are permitted to try our faith."

"So said the Lord Falkland then; and to comfort me he tried his own fortune."

"And how," said Herbert, "did it fall out?"

"He opened," replied the King, "on the words—

'Heu miserande puer! si qua fata aspera rumpas,
Tu Marcellus eris!'

How that prediction was fulfilled in him, you have seen; how the other may be fulfilled in me, God only knows."

"Does not your Majesty," asked Tresham, "think that there may be something like a tempting God in so prying into what He would have hidden?"

"Laud thought not so," answered Charles; "and I have ever been a noter of such things. It was taken of many as strange, that he should have attained his mastership of S. John's, on the day of the Decollation of S. John Baptist; and it was thought to be a foreshadowing of that fate which afterwards befel him. It was noted too, that at our proclamation the herald, instead of 'the rightful and indubitable,' did term us 'the rightful and *dubitable* heir.' And again, at our coronation, the Bishop of Carlisle did take for his text, 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the Crown of life;' which was fitter for a funeral sermon. And what befel our standard when it was set up at Nottingham all England hath heard."

"I have heard my father say," replied Tresham, "that however we may sometimes, after the event hath come to pass, trace out the foreshadowings thus, dangerous it is to dwell on them aforehand. For perchance our belief in them may help to fulfil

them. Besides," he added, smiling, "I, too, have an omen, and that a happier one, for your Majesty. The prince's chaplain did, as was his wont, read Prayers this morning to the regiment; and the psalm for the day was that which beginneth, 'Give the King thy judgments, O GOD! and thy righteousness unto the King's Son.'"

"It was so," said Charles; "I did myself note it. But, one way or the other, to-day must decide our hopes; and it is a solemn thing to await the coming on of such a crisis, and to know what mighty events may depend upon it."

"GOD grant," said Herbert, "that it may so end, as that all things may return to the good old course."

"No, Tresham," answered the King; "were I to obtain the greatest victory ever won by prince, things would nevertheless not return to the good old course. The old and kindly feelings, the heartiness and affectionateness and reverence of my people are gone, for this generation at least; we shall never see England what it has been, whatever our sons may do. It is as when a child hath been thrown into wicked training: he may perchance escape from real harm, but he shall not be the same innocent child that he was. You may handle a flower without hurting it, but its bloom and its freshness will go. And so they have heard their Church defiled with evil reports, Her holiest things profaned, the names of Her Bishops

cast out as evil: how shall they look on these things as they did aforetime?"

At this moment the scout-master returned with the information that he had been four or five miles forward and could hear or see nothing of the enemy, and that Prince Rupert had thereupon drawn out a party of horse and musketeers, and advanced.

"Will your Majesty give the word to advance," asked Herbert, "and support the Prince?"

"Not so," said the King; "we will not willingly be drawn from our vantage ground. Our orders were strict to the Prince, and he will surely venture no nearer than he may come off with honour."

About twenty minutes more elapsed: the report became general in the army that the enemy had retired; and the soldiers fretted at that which would, could they have foreseen all, proved their greatest happiness. At the end of that time, however, a messenger gallopped up from Prince Rupert, with the news that the enemy were advancing, and a request that the army should march up to him, and that, above all, they should make haste.

"Now then, Tresham, give the word," said the King. It was done; and then it was Lord Ashley uttered that noble prayer, which, as a practical example of acting on the apostolic injunction, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit," is, and probably ever will be, unsurpassed;—"O Lord, Thou knowest

how busy I must be to-day; if I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me!—March on, boys!"

It was a gay and a gallant sight, that last hour that Charles acted as King of England. The men were in excellent spirits: the ground slightly undulating displayed their force to the greatest advantage, and as Tresham rode by the side of the King, the latter twice or thrice expressed his confidence in his troops, and seemed to gain fresh courage as he approached the scene of action. After marching about a mile and a half, the enemy was distinctly seen drawn up on Naseby heights: having both the advantage of the ground and time, from the view their situation gave them of the royal army, to dispose themselves as they thought fittest to receive its attack. When the main body was yet nearly half a mile behind him, Rupert, who could never bear the sight of an enemy, advanced up the hill. The king saw his motion, and said, in great agitation, "Tresham, that hare-brained youth has ruined us by his impatience. Was ever such madness!"

"There is now no help for it," said Tresham, "but to support him as quickly as possible."

The word was accordingly given to advance in double quick time; and this speed was soon accelerated to complete running.

It was about ten minutes past ten o'clock when the three divisions of the royal army came upon the hill. The numbers were nearly equal on both sides: the rebels being rather inferior; they had, however,

slightly the advantage of the sun; in all other respects their chance was the better. They, too, were drawn up in three divisions: the centre commanded by Fairfax, the right wing by Cromwell, the left by Ireton; they were cool, admirably posted, and collected. The royalists advanced out of breath, heated, up a steep hill, without choice of ground, before their cannon could be placed, and having nothing to rely upon but their courage. Their word was, "God and the King!" The rebels chose, "God is with us!" Thus the stake was thrown which was to decide the fate of England.

Sergeant Fletcher had taken up his position on a little hillock, close by the Pitsford-lane, which commands a perfect view of the whole field. Here he tethered his horse, and resolved to await the issue. His heart, as he was wont afterwards to describe it, came into his mouth, when he saw the irregular and hurried advance of the royalists, and the cool and steady bearing of their opponents; yet his hopes revived as he noticed the gallant manner in which Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice charged up the hill. Every thing went down before them; and he saw six pieces of cannon in their hands almost without a struggle. Then his interest was wound up to the highest pitch for Lord Ashley, who was also advancing, though with great difficulty, up a steeper part. The enemies' cannon was so badly pointed, that it completely overshot them, and so did the musquetcers; when within carabine shot, they fired

one volley, and then fell in with their swords and the butt-ends of their muskets; and after a struggle of about a quarter of an hour were in possession of the brow. Fletcher now thought the victory safe; and mounting his horse, rode back at full speed to report the good tidings.

It had been a morning of intense excitement at Scaldwell: the inhabitants, quite unable to pursue their ordinary employments, collected in the village street, to express their hopes and fears, to tell old stories of former battles, or debate the chances of this. Several of the men strolled out westward; some mounted the church-tower, where, however, all that met their view was a long dark stationary line on the summit of Naseby-heights. This every one knew must be the parliamentary army; but why the other had not advanced was a difficulty which no one could solve,—as its eagerness for fighting was well known, and the result of the council had been heard by all. Mr. Tresham was inclined to think that a second determination must have been taken; and was almost disposed to hope that such might be the case. By degrees, the interest was too much wound up to allow of words, and the observations interchanged became briefer and briefer. Mr. Tresham, with Agatha and Rose, went several times into the village during the early part of the morning, without being able to discover any thing. At length, as for the fourth time they entered the churchyard, about half-past ten, one of those on the tower asserted his

belief that the troops were moving; and a moment afterwards the dull distant sound of a heavy cannonade was heard.

"It is begun! they are at it!" cried two or three voices at once; and then a short pause of listening ensued, followed by a faint and irregular discharge of musketry.

"My friends," said Mr. Tresham, "we neither advantage ourselves nor the King by this excitement; there is a way by which we may help both. You, who are willing to try it, follow me into the church."

As soon as it was known that prayers were about to be offered up for the good success of the King, the whole village flocked together; and never had that holy Temple been so filled in the time of the Church's glory, as it was now at the hour of Her deepest abasement. Mr. Tresham, kneeling down, as was then the reverent usage, in the midst of the Chancel, began the Litany; and truly and heartily did the congregation join in every response. And when he came to the petition, "That it may please Thee to be his defender and keeper, giving him the victory over all his enemies," Mr. Tresham felt that though the weapons of his warfare were not carnal, they might, nevertheless,—in the unseen might of prayer,—be more effectual for the Royal Cause than the arm of flesh, in which it was too much given to trust. And comforting indeed did he find the Collect: "Save and deliver us, we hum-

bly beseech Thee, from the hands of our enemies; abate their pride, assuage their malice, and confound their devices; that we, being armed with Thy defence, may be preserved evermore from all perils, to glorify Thee, Who art the only Giver of all victory." And as he pronounced the final blessing, he felt that even in the midst of outward war, the Peace of God might be, and was present with them.

When the congregation again repaired to the churchyard, the cloudiness of the western sky, and the sulphureous smell which every breeze brought with it, proved how hot had been the conflict. Every thing on the hill was entirely hidden by the smoke; with the exception of the roar of a single cannon at intervals, not a sound was to be heard; and not a sign was there of the fate of the day. At length, after an hour of miserable suspense, the quick galloping of a horse was heard on the Brixworth-road, and in a moment Sergeant Fletcher rode up, waving his hat, and showing every sign of joy. In a few words, he told them of the complete defeat of the rebels; and explained all he had seen. "I marvel," he added, "that none of them passed through the village; for Prince Rupert gave them a hot chase this way."

All was joy and exultation; the churchwardens and the rector shook hands; some were for a merry peal of bells; but this was opposed by the more prudent part, on the ground that there might be straggling bands about, whom it would be safer not to exaspe-

rate. Fletcher, having disburdened himself of his news, rode off again; and in the course of half an hour, two or three wounded royalists were brought into the village, who confirmed the tidings of this great victory.

Sergeant Fletcher rode on towards Naseby; and could not help feeling somewhat astonished at finding the hill, which he left in possession of the royalists, entirely deserted; he could not comprehend what had become of the main body, nor why the royal standard was not any where to be seen. As he rode over the field, its southern part was strewn thickly with the dead and the dying of the rebel side; but on the north, the scene was changed,—hundreds of cavaliers lay dead on the ascent of the hill; and what most of all surprised him was, that the loss among Cromwell's barbed horse had been so very small; the known courage of the Ironsides rendering him certain that they would have made the most desperate resistance before yielding the post. Still it was not till he heard the sound of firing further to the west, that a glimpse of the real truth flashed upon him. 'It is impossible,' was his first thought; but his second reminded him that the victory had been considered certain at Marston Moor; and his third suggested that he had been too hasty in not waiting the result of Sir Marmaduke Langdale's attack.

His fears soon received a sad confirmation from some of the wounded royalists: from these he learnt that Cromwell's seven bodies of foot had

proved an overmatch for Sir Marmaduke Langdale's five; that Prince Rupert, with his characteristic impetuosity, had suffered himself to be hurried so far from the scene of action, in pursuit of the enemy's left wing, as to be unable to give any assistance; and the report went, that the treachery and cowardice of the Earl of Cairnwath had prevented the king from advancing with the reserve. The full loss sustained in that most fatal battle he did not know till afterwards; but the information he received was more than sufficient to cause him to ride sadly and slowly homeward.

News of the truth had however reached Scaldwell before his arrival. Agatha was sitting alone, her father and sister being in the village, when Colonel Tresham burst in, and in a few brief words gave her to understand the whole extent of the misfortune. "It is, humanly speaking," he said, "impossible that the Royal Cause can ever hold up its head again. We may, and please God we will, give the rebels some further trouble yet; but Cromwell and Fairfax are as sure of their aims, as if they were now issuing their orders from Whitehall."

"And what, my dearest Herbert, do you intend to do? Not, I hope, to linger here, where they will be sure to hunt for you?"

"His Majesty's business requires that I should remain some time in these parts," her brother replied, "in order to see if any of the stragglers can be got together again. I shall get such quarters as

I may at Kettering. Trelawney will be with me: and if you should wish to communicate with me, you may leave any message with Mistress Ditford, at the sign of the Bible (it used to be the Bible and Crown), in the market-place. You may fully trust her: she is the widow of one of our army chaplains, and is much in the confidence of several that are high in authority. And perhaps it will be better not to mention to my father that you have seen me, or know any thing of my movements; he will have enough, I fear, to answer for, without being burdened with an unnecessary secret."

"I will do as you wish me," said Agatha. "Now go, and God bless you. You shall assuredly hear tidings of us—God send they be good ones!"

In a few minutes Herbert was spurring his weary horse towards Kettering, and Agatha walked out to meet her father. What a sad meeting it was, it is easy to conceive. They who had parted but an hour before with the highest and brightest hopes, now met with the knowledge that they must never be again entertained. Then it was that the faith of Mr. Tresham shone forth beautifully. It had not been his wont to dwell on frames and feelings, as well knowing how little trust can be placed in them. He had always discouraged the habit of speaking of that on which the Puritans loved so much to dwell—personal experience: but now he showed that in an habitual, calm, earnest trust that all would finally be ordered best for the Church, and for himself, as a part of it, he

yielded to none. Still it was a melancholy evening; and, as the light faded away, and the summer twilight crept over the garden, sad was the contrast between this and the Saturday evenings of by-gone years. Agatha, indeed, had one comfort beyond the rest. She knew of the safety of Herbert; but she also knew him to be in a post of danger, and sighed, when she recollected the treachery of many who had been considered firm royalists. Late in the evening came news that the King was safe, and retreating towards Lichfield, but that all his papers and jewels were in the possession of the enemy; and that two hundred women, wives of royalist officers and soldiers, had been butchered in cold blood after the battle, by the rebels.

Short and broken was the sleep of the rector and his family that night; they knew not at what moment to expect a visit from some parliamentary regiment, and how soon a committee of inquiry might sit on Mr. Tresham. But the night passed over, and the Sunday morning broke as beautifully as ever on the village.

CHAPTER VI.

"This was he whom we had some time in derision, and a proverb of reproach; how is he numbered with the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints!"—*Wisdom* v. 35.

It is no new remark, that never are the prayers of our Church so beautiful, and never is Her influence felt to be so soothing, as when we are in deep and hopeless affliction. Probably not one of those who went up to join in that service on the morning succeeding the battle, but found a quieting and supporting influence, which he had never known before. The sermon was short, but to the point; the text was that verse, "O tarry thou the Lord's leisure, be strong, and He shall comfort thy heart, and put thou thy trust in the Lord." The Holy Communion was over, and the congregation were dispersing, when three officers rode up to the church, and inquired for Master Tresham. The clergyman came out to meet them, and was immediately required to appear before the committee, named in a paper put into his hands, at two o'clock that afternoon, to answer such charges as should then and there be

brought forward against him. "And you, who have a mind to be fed with the sincere milk of the Gospel, not with the prelatical trumperies of Antichrist," said one of them, who appeared a minister, addressing the people, who were watching the result of the summons, "gather together in this place this evening, for I am disposed myself to break the bread of life to you."

"May I ask your name, sir?" said Mr. Tresham, to him who seemed the leader of the party.

"My name is Richard White," said the other, "a poor labourer in the blessed work of reformation, and chairman of the committee for the ejection of scandalous ministers."

"I trust, then, Master White, if you be indeed he, that I shall have fair play. Of the six men whose names I see marked down as my jury, three I know nought of; and the other three are notorious and old breakers of the laws, both of God and man. Two, to my certain knowledge, have been, ere this, in Northampton gaol; and, as to Master Nynd, of better rank though he be than the rest, his character is well known here, and I think his testimony would weigh little with any honest man. Besides, none of these men have ever been church-goers, so that it is impossible for them to judge of my doctrine."

"What then?" said White. "Grant they have been sinners—so was Paul—so was David—so was

Mary Magdalene. The greatest sinner makes the greatest saint."

"Touching Mary Magdalene," said the minister, "Master Calvin holdeth somewhat differently from your honour. For in his commentary on that passage he saith ——"

"Well, Master Adkyns, it mattereth little what he saith: I mean, I will hear it some other opportunity; and now, Master Tresham, if you would fare well at our hands, you will give as little trouble to us as possible, and rather throw yourself on our mercy, than obstinately persist in and defend those your popish errors; and so farewell."

"I will go with you, sir," said Farmer Downton; "if my testimony is worth any thing, it shall not be wanting."

"Not so, my good friend," answered the rector; "that could not benefit me, and might much endanger you."

"Do you think, sir, that we shall let you go before these men alone? They cannot hurt me, I think: and I care not if they can. And if the young ladies, meanwhile, will come down to my farm—a poor house it is, but an honest one—and that is more than Lawyer Nynd could say; all I and my wife have shall be at their service; and they may be guests till this matter is settled."

"Well, my good friend, we will take your offer, as kindly as it is meant. Come, Agatha; come, Rose;

we will walk down together to Farmer Downton's; and there I will leave you."

"But, my dearest father," said Rose, "do tell us what is the worst we may expect."

"That I shall be deprived," said Mr. Tresham. "Further, I think, they dare not venture, and less we must not expect. And that is no strange trial, now-a-days," he added; "so that, literally and truly, we may remember S. Peter's words, and bless God it is no worse."

Having left his daughters in safety at the old farm-house, the beau-ideal of an English yeoman's abode, the clergyman and churchwarden then bent their way to the appointed place.

Nynd, a man of very low degree, had been a pettifogging attorney at Kettering; but having lost his character by repeated acts of dishonesty, by which, however, he had acquired a small fortune, he built himself a house in Scaldwell, and had endeavoured to ingratiate himself with Mr. Tresham, for the purpose of securing the fortune, which was not inconsiderable, of Agatha. Having, however, met with a decided refusal from her, in revenge he turned Puritan, and was a man of considerable importance to that party in Northamptonshire. His very looks showed his character: hypocrisy was stamped in his face; and his own party acknowledged that he was a most dangerous man to offend. It was he who had been the principal instrument of obtaining a commission to inquire into

Mr. Tresham's proceedings, and he had drawn up the articles.

In this man's parlour was the committee assembled. White was sitting at the end of a long table, Nynd on his right hand, and the other men were in order on each side. A chair was left for the clergyman at the bottom; several of the parishioners were standing in various parts of the room, and many more clustering round the door. As Mr. Tresham entered, he was comforted by hearing the heart-felt prayers of some of these poor people: "God bless you, sir! God preserve you!" On taking his seat, he requested to know the reason why, especially on that holy day, he had been summoned; and under what authority his summoners acted.

"Read the commission, Master Nynd," said White. Nynd obeyed, as follows:—

"Die Veneris, 6to Jun. 1645. Whereas Herbert Tresham, Clerk, Rector of the parish church of Scaldwell, in the county of Northamptonshire, hath in his sermons, and otherwise, expressed great malignity and opposition against the parliament, and the power and proceedings thereof: affirming that the parliament would force the King to comply with those laws that they made; and that they raise a force against the King; and that they are not to be obeyed; and advised not to send them money, plate, or horses; and hath also been guilty of divers popish and superstitious practices, hereinunder written:

which the Lords and Commons taking into consideration, for the better supply of an able and godly man in the said church, and for the promotion of the maintenance of those that shall officiate therein, do constitute and ordain that Richard White, Richard Nynd, Emmanuel Stark, Peter Chaubley, John Rushby, Edward Hyatt, shall have, or any three of them shall have, power and authority, and are hereby required to examine into and touching these things; and in case they shall so appear, to sequester the parsonage-house, and all the tithes, rents, and profits whatsoever, of the said church, and to appoint collectors for the gathering and receiving of them, as they in their discretion shall think fit; and shall have power to pay the same unto Robert Adkyns, a godly and orthodox divine, who shall be appointed and requested to preach every Lord's day, and to officiate as parson, and to take care for the discharge of the cure of the said place, in all the duties thereof, until further orders shall be taken by both houses of parliament."

The articles against him were as follows:

"1. Imprimis: That he useth the Common Prayer.

"2. That he boweth at the name of Jesus.

"3. That he preacheth for the standing up at the Gloria Patri.

"4. That he useth the sign of the Cross in Baptism, and the ring in marriage.

"5. That he prayeth for the deliverance of the saints out of purgatory."

"You have heard, Master Tresham," said White, "both of what you are accused, and by whom you are judged, and by what authority they act. Now, forasmuch as we are willing to use all gentleness towards you, we are willing to hear your defence, if you have any, at length. And we would have you further to know, and you, good people, will take note, that though we thus use the sabbath on this occasion, being thereto compelled by necessity, yet we deem it no precedent for others, who should rather, by frequenting of godly preachers, seek to edify their souls, than to follow their ordinary business and vocation. And now, Master Tresham, we would fain hear what reply you make to the first charge against you, namely, that you have used the Prayer-book ever since it was by act of parliament abolished."

"In the first place," said the clergyman, "I utterly protest against and repudiate your authority, as proceeding from a body who hath no right to give it. Nevertheless, sith something you have there said having truth, albeit intermingled with great errors, I am willing to say that which I can to clear myself in the sight of all honest men. Wherefore, I demand, why I should not use the Prayer-book?"

"Because parliament hath appointed in its stead a directory of prayers, and that with good and just reasons."

"Which be they?" asked the other.

"The old form," answered White, "is full of

popish errors, and doth appoint horrid blasphemies and lying fables to be read to the people, instead of God's word; and hath caused the Church of England to groan under the abominations of the Church of Rome from its infancy upwards."

"I have been forty years a Priest," said Mr. Tresham, "and yet I never heard blasphemies or fables."

"What!" said Nynd, "say you so? On the fourth of October, in the forenoon, it appointeth a horrible blasphemy to be read for the first lesson, out of the 12th of Tobit, and the ninth verse: where it is written, 'That alms do save from death, and purge away all sin;' which is a main ground of popery."

"Right well said," observed Adkyns, the minister, who was expecting the presentation to Scaldwell; "it is indeed an horrible blasphemy: and he that hath uttered such can hardly, methinks, be accounted worthy to be a labourer in God's vineyard, even as it is written, 'Let his habitation be void, and his bishopric let another man take.'"

"Then again," said White, "fearful is it to hear how the interrupting of the minister by the clerk and the whole congregation breedeth uproar and confusion, such as doth much offend God; so that many cannot come to church till the service be all read."

"But, Master White," said the rector.

"Hold thy tongue, friend," answered White; "I promise thee, it will be the worse for thee else. I

do not sit hear to learn, but to examine. And, as I was saying, the people ought to be silent till the minister hath done, and then to say, Amen: and not to break in by responds."

"Master White saith well," remarked Chaubley, a man who had been twice in Northampton gaol on charges of peculation; "when the minister prayeth for the King (he were better, methinks, to pray for the parliament), saying, 'O Lord, save the King,' they interrupt him by mingling their prayers with his, and saying, 'And mercifully hear us when we call upon Thee.' He being thus put out, doth straightway pray for all ministers, and they interrupt him again to pray for the people."

"Also," said Rushby, "when they read the 50th Psalm, they are like unto women scolding and rating at one another. The clerk and people do begin to accuse the minister, saying, 'When thou sawest a thief, thou consentest unto him, and hast been partaker with the adulterers:' then the priest accuseth the clerk, 'Thou hast let thy mouth speak wickedness, and with thy tongue thou hast set forth deceit:' then they set upon the minister again, and cry out with one voice, 'Thou satest and spakest against thy brother, and hast slandered thine own mother's son.'"

"Master Rushby," said Adkyns, "it is not well done to speak of priests, a name which belongeth unto all Christian men and women, as well as unto ministers; as it is written, 'He hath made us kings and priests.'"

"A most gross misquotation," said Mr. Tresham: "S. John there speaketh ——"

"Wilt thou never cease thy babbling, friend?" said White; "I tell thee, thy Church, as thou callest it, is a suburb of Babylon, and thou shouldest be thankful to hear these godly professors warn thee to come out of it. Yet worse things be there than such: as in the churching of women, where the clerk saith to the minister, 'Which putteth her trust in Thee;' then the minister will not have her put her trust in him, but turneth her over to the clerk, and bids him be to her a strong tower; and the clerk answereth and sheweth wherein, saying, 'from the face of her enemy.'"

"I marvel," interrupted the rector, "that any man, calling himself a Christian, should dare to falsify and blasphemously to pervert ——"

"Friend," answered Nynd, "thou art not now in thy pulpit, and troublest us. A very strange kind of giving God thanks is this, and a trouble to many honest women, who must come with a veil to cover their faces after the Jewish manner, as though they were ceremonially unclean."

"Yea, but worst of all," said Adkyns, "is the service for Baptism, which containeth interrogations to infants that have no understanding, 'whether they do forsake the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world,' and the rest."

"And, above all," said Chaubley, "is that to be of good Protestants abhorred, where the clergyman

doth sign the child's forehead with the sign of the Cross, which is indeed the very mark of the beast."

"And again it saith," remarked White, "that GOD hath sanctified the river Jordan, and all other waters, to the mystical washing away of sin."

"Yea but, Master White, what thinketh your honour of that in the Catechism, where it saith, that 'CHRIST died for all mankind;' not for the elect only?"

"Oh, blasphemous and Arminian error!" returned White; "whereas the elect be but few in comparison of the multitude of them that be reprobates!"

"Furthermore," observed Hyatt, "it perverts the meaning of the HOLY GHOST in many places, by putting in and leaving out words, and by calling those places of Scripture epistles which are indeed no epistles, but prophecies."

"And dreadful is it," remarked White, "which is set forth for the Visitation of the Sick. The minister must go to their houses, and salute them, as the Mass Priest doth, saying, 'Peace be to this house, and to all that are in it.' And when he is come to where the sick person is, he must kneel, and read three or four lines of the Litany, and *Lord have mercy upon us*, and the Lord's Prayer, and five versicles of a line and a half long, and a short prayer, and an exhortation,—and then absolve a sick person from all his sins, and begins the absolution with an untruth, that CHRIST hath left power to His Church,

to absolve all sinners that do truly repent and believe in Him."

"The truth is," rejoined Adkyns, "that CHRIST hath not given power to His Church to forgive sins; and no Church doth take it upon itself but the synagogue of Satan, the Church of Rome, and so many of the Lords Bishops and the clergy of England as are popish."

"All which errors," said White, "thou, Master Tresham, hast blasphemously maintained, by persisting to read that book of Antichrist, the Common Prayer."

"And unworthy had I been," said Mr. Tresham, "to eat the bread of the Church, if I did not obey Her commands. I was born and bred up in Her; She has been to me a most tender and loving mother; GOD has by Her hands fed me all my life long; and it shall not be these poor, miserable, thrice-told slanders against Her that shall prevent my dying in Her Communion. Trampled on Her, you have; persecute Her sons, you may. You have deprived Her of Her fair lands and goodly possessions; you have defiled Her temples, and hushed Her services; yet She, for all that, is the Church, and you are, and can be nought else, schismatics from Her, and cut off from the blessed company of all faithful people."

"I forgive thy railings," said White, "and rejoice that I am counted worthy to be evil-spoken of for CHRIST's sake. Thou dost but speak now as thou didst not long ago, when thou saidst that to die ex-

communicate and to perish everlastingly were one and the same thing,—as it is reported to us by credible witnesses."

"Never spake I such words," said the other. "What I said was this, that it is not for man to judge of individual cases; but that I would not, for all this world's wealth, die under sentence of excommunication; and so say I still."

"Touching bowing at the name of JESUS," said Nynd, "hast thou, or hast thou not, done this?"

"I have," said the rector; "and sooner would I be torn in pieces by wild horses, than give up such an old and godly practice; a practice which even your own party do not blame; for even Sir Edward Dering said in the House of Commons, 'I will do bodily reverence to my SAVIOUR, and that upon occasion taken at His saving name, JESUS.'"

"It is true," answered Adkyns, "that Dering said those words, or the like of them; but who is he, that we should call him master? Worthy Master Prynne did long ago, in his tractate, called 'Lame Giles, his haltings,' refute such a practice, and him I would rather incline to follow."

"But now," asked Nynd, "what say you to the accusation about the Altar? You have moved it to the east end, where it never ought to be, and have called that an Altar, which is indeed but a table."

"Master White," said Mr. Tresham, "divers accusations have you brought against me, not letting me know who they be that accuse me. Where-

fore, before I make answer to any other, I demand to have them set before me, that I may be able to convict them, if they speak falsely."

"Godly Master Nynd is our witness," answered White, "and we need none other; so that if thou hast aught to object, thou mayest allege it boldly."

"It is a most unheard-of thing," exclaimed the rector, "that the same party should be a witness and a judge. I call upon you, good people, to take note of this; and furthermore to observe, that, the state of things being such as to make it impossible for me to have justice, I will make no further answer."

There was a cry of "shame!" among some of the bolder standers-by; and White, rising angrily, said, "Who crieth shame? This ungodly man hath confessed that he hath nothing to reply; wherefore, we will proceed to pass sentence on him."

"Stop, Master White," said the churchwarden; "here have I an attestation, signed by fifty, the most respectable householders in the parish, touching the character of Mr. Tresham, which I would crave leave to read."

"Had we not better proceed at once?" said Adkyns. "The day weareth; and there is much else to be done."

"My friend," returned White, "better were it that we should hear it with all fairness. Read on, Mr. Churchwarden, but be not over tedious."

Farmer Downton read as follows:—"These are to testify, that Master Tresham hath about thirty years

been very painful in discharging his duty, by preaching and catechising every Sunday; and also, in the great sickness, not forsaken his flock; and hath both himself given, and caused others to give, much charity in that extremity and at other times; and hath lived blameless, and done much good in this parish. This paper," he added, "is signed by fifty names, all men of honest repute."

"We will not hear them," said White. "And now have all men out, that our deliberations be not hindered."

After a consultation of about five minutes, Mr. Tresham was recalled, and informed that, in consideration of his manifold popish errors, and his contumacy to the commissioners, he was utterly deprived of the rectory of Scaldwell, and all rents, dues, profits, and revenues, thereunto belonging; and that the same were given, according to the authority in them vested, by the said commissioners, to Master Robert Adkyns, from that day forward to have and enjoy.

"And forasmuch," said White, "as we have heard much of sundry popish and Arminian books in your possession, we think fit to examine them ourselves, and shall go thither incontinently for that end; and, furthermore, we desire your company."

We are too apt, in reviewing the sufferings of the English Church at this period, to lose sight of the lesser miseries to which her true and unflinching sons were exposed. Many a time was the scene we are

going to describe acted over; and yet how little do we admire the courage and fidelity of those who bore all rather than flinch from their duty! All the acts of Christian heroism and patient continuance in well-doing then displayed will never be known till the end of all things; and yet, from the records of the times, we may form some idea of what they must have been. The many happy family circles dispersed, never to be reunited on earth; the barbarity with which every thing that family affection held most sacred was displayed to the gaze of the rude and jesting soldiers; the destruction of fondly cherished memorials of the absent or departed; the cruel heartlessness with which things, valueless in themselves, but hallowed by recollections and associations, were given up to wanton destruction—light store do we set by all these things. And what reward had those who suffered them in their generation? "Trials of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; they were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, OF WHOM THE WORLD WAS NOT WORTHY!" If they lived to be restored, it was not till the decline of life, after sixteen years of misery, and then to a Church but the faint shadow of Her former self. Some died, slaves in the plantations; some, strangers in a strange land; some, confined in noisome dungeons. And their own miseries were as nothing, compared with those which they whom they held dearest felt. It

was a noble triumph of faith, which could see wife and children threatened with starvation and misery, and yet fainted not in its resolution! And what reward have they from us? Many, who call themselves Churchmen, seem to sympathise far more with their blood-thirsty and cruel adversaries, the Puritans: they speak of the purity of their doctrinal views, as if they were to form an exception to the rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them*." But it is soothing and cheering to know, that cast out by their contemporaries, and little regarded by us, these holy men have had their reward—and that we may use, in respect to them, the words of one of their number, himself a glorious Confessor for the Church of CHRIST. "Those blessed ones with GOD, that have fought a good fight, kept the faith, finished their course, as they are now regnant in glory with their REDEEMER, so are they honourable amongst the righteous upon earth for ever. They have left a name behind them, so that their praise shall be remembered for evermore. The LORD hath gotten great glory by them, and therefore with renown He will reward them. No Christian will deny or envy them their due: and for myself I say with Nazianzen, it doth me good at heart to see them honoured: I admire, reverence,

* "*Occasionally* disagreeing, as I do, with the views of the Puritans," says the Rev. E. Bickersteth, at the commencement of a 'Recommendatory Notice' of a collection of their Commentaries.

adore them in their kind; their triumphs and trophies over death and hell, my tongue and pen shall most willingly set out to life, with all the poor skill and faculty I have. Thrice happy reapers of That mighty Boaz, that did so worthily in Ephrata, and were so famous in Bethlehem,—that sowed in tears when you went out weeping, but reap now the fruit of your labours in joy; you have left some gleanings for Ruth to gather after you, to the comfort and cherishing of her poor widowed mother. Thrice happy guests of That Royal Ahasuerus, admitted to eat at His royal table in His palace, to drink the sweet wine of felicity in the cups of immortality, clad in the wedding garments of immutability * !"

But to return to our story. The committee of reformers accompanied the rector to the parsonage, and straightway made their way to the library. If Mr. Tresham had ever allowed himself a luxury, it was that of books; and there was in consequence a fine and valuable collection chiefly of the Fathers and of early divinity Huge folio tomes, with parchment backs as white as snow, and paging of deep red stood round the lower shelves; some with embossed sides, some with huge brazen clasps; all bearing traces both of diligent study and of careful keeping. S. Chrysostom, and S. Augustine, and S. Gregory, and S. Basil, and a hundred others of those glorious witnesses to, and guardians of, Catholic Truth; there

* Montague's *Just Invocation.*

were our own divines, Hooker, and Andrewes, and Whitgift, and others, who lived in the days when "there were giants on the earth;" there were also many choice tracts of what was then modern divinity, and some of these were presentation copies, such as Laud's "Answer to Fisher," Pocklington's "Altare Christianum," and Montague's "Appello Cæsarem." No wonder then if Mr. Tresham prized his library above any other of his earthly possessions; and still less that his persecutors took a barbarous pleasure in mutilating or defacing his choicest volumes, and throwing the rest into a heap, lest they should be in the way of the new comer. His sermons, the fruit of many a laborious hour during thirty years' ministry, when sermons were not the composition of an evening but the fruit of a week, in their zeal to prevent the dissemination of error, they burnt or destroyed. In one of the deep old wainscot closets were all the little treasures of Agatha and Rose: this they heartlessly broke open, strewed the precious records of cherished affection therein contained, letters, and memoranda, and keepsakes, over the floor, and commented on them with brutal ridicule and insolence. When they had thoroughly finished their work of devastation, they bade Mr. Tresham to begone, as having no business in a house no longer his own; and he was on the point of obeying, when Nynd, who had been for some minutes absent, returned, and taking White apart, spoke a few words to him in private. The latter then said, "Master

Tresham, we are given to understand that you have lately, since the battle, entertained your son, an officer in the army of the man Charles Stuart, and that you know where at present he lies hid. If you will tell us your knowledge of this matter, well; if not, we may, peradventure, resort to such means as we and you should equally dislike."

"Master White," returned the other, "true it is that my son is, or, alas that I should say it! was, in his Majesty's service; but where he hath bestowed himself since the battle, as I know not, so, if I did, you would be the last to whom I should impart my knowledge. But, as it is, I have neither seen nor heard tidings of him since the night before the fight."

"I will take your word, Master Tresham," said White, "for in this you speak like an honest man. And I think, Master Nynd, you must be fain to rest satisfied with this matter, and pass to other things."

"I would humbly crave of your honour," returned Nynd, "that Mistress Tresham be summoned; and you may call me fool, if she knoweth not something herein."

"You may call my daughter before you, sirs, if you will," said Mr. Tresham: "but to my knowledge, she can say nothing concerning the matter. However, you must do your pleasure herein."

Mistress Downton had in the mean time been using her best endeavours to keep up the spirits of

her guests, but could, unfortunately, think of no other way to accomplish this end than by relating stories of events in the war which had come under her own knowledge. After telling of some clergymen dispossessed of all they had, and ejected from their houses in the dead of winter; of others allowed to linger for months in the Fleet or Marshalsea, unheard and uncondemned, she proceeded to relate an instance of persecution which seemed to have impressed her more deeply than any other.

"Then, again," she continued, "there was good Dr. Sterne, who was right shamefully used of them. My son, now in London, (an honest lad he is, and a comely, though I say it that should not,) did tell me concerning him. He was kept in a ship lying in the Thames, with other gentlemen of good rank, for ten days together, under the deck, more like galley-slaves than free Englishmen: and marry, they were like enough to have been slaves indeed, for all that while some were bargaining with the merchants to sell them to Algiers, or as bad a place. Under the hatches they lay, for there was neither room to sit nor stand, to the number of eighty, and were like to have been suffocated; and, to make the matter worse, the captain had all the vent-holes stopped up. It was that terrible hot August, the year before last, and neither water nor fresh air had they for hours together."

"And how did he get out at last?" asked Rose.

"Why," said her informant, "it was thought he

would be safer in the Fleet; and when he was being taken there, a bystander had like to have been sent with him, only for saying, 'That he looked like an honest man.' At last they sent him to be with the good archbishop at his execution, and then he made a shift to get away to the King at Oxford."

These stories served but poorly to satisfy Agatha against the surprise of being summoned before the committee. She was told, in her way thither, by Sergeant Fletcher, the cause of her being sent for; and this gave her a few moments to make up her mind as to the course to be pursued.

When she entered her father's study, that room where the best and pleasantest hours of her life had been spent, sad indeed was the contrast which struck her. It hardly seemed the same room, where, while she sat with her father in the hot mornings of summer, the sun-beams forcing their way with difficulty through the green leaves outside, and the thick glass of the window, deep and narrow, and with mullions of stone, threw a pleasant green quivering light on the old oaken shelves. Then, again, she remembered the delight she had felt, when a child, at seeing the thick red curtains drawn, fresh logs thrown on the fire, and while the howling of the wind was heard round the exposed corner, or its rumbling down the great old chimney, the glee with which her father would push from him his books and papers, and drawing his chair to the fire, would say, "Well, children, and what shall we read to-night?"

Now it was indeed different. The book-shelves were empty; their precious contents scattered over the floor, or thrown into a smouldering fire, which the ruffians had lighted in the middle of the lawn; and several articles of clothing, which she had herself, with Rose's help, manufactured for some of the old people, scattered carelessly here and there. White was indolently lolling back in the easy chair; a cup of canary (for they had helped themselves to the contents of the cellar) was beside him; and was deeply engaged in the perusal of one of the few parliament books which the rector possessed, (he had once entertained thoughts of answering it) Prynne's *Quench Coale:* three or four other members of the committee were regaling themselves at the table; and Nynd, with the impatience of a fiend, was pacing up and down the room, and waiting the arrival of her, concerning whom it might well be said, that "the hatred with which he hated her was more than the love wherewith he had loved her." Mr. Tresham was calmly awaiting the issue of the inquiry, and watching, from the open window, the arrival of his daughter, and his faithful servant. Bates was standing at a respectful distance, and affectionately observing every motion of his dear master.

At last Agatha entered the room, and at the same moment Mr. Tresham came forward to meet her, and White, laying down the book he was reading, but not moving, said, "Mistress Tresham, our time is precious, and you have much detained us. I have

but a brief question to ask of you, and I will pray you to give me a brief answer. Have you, or have you not, seen your brother, Herbert Tresham, commonly called Colonel Tresham, since yesterday morning?"

Mr. Tresham felt the hand, which he had drawn through his own arm, tremble: but Agatha made no answer.

"Come, Mistress," said Nynd, "tell us all you know herein, and keep us not waiting, like a peevish girl, while you are thinking what answer to give. Come, I say, tell us all you know."

"Master Nynd," returned Agatha, "if one man less than another should desire me to tell all I know, you yourself are that man: as none knows better than yourself."

"Do not," replied White, "bandy words with your father's judges, young woman: but let us hear at once what it is you have to say."

"My dear child," whispered her father, "better it is not to enrage these men further. Tell them at once that you know nought of your brother, and may be they will let you go."

"But, father," returned Agatha, "say so I cannot with truth: for I have both seen him, and know where he is now."

"God protect you, then, my poor child," said Mr. Tresham, "for I cannot. At all events, come what may, you must speak the truth, and shame the devil."

"Which is much the same thing as shaming Master White," said Fletcher, who stood by.

"Now then," said White, "I ask you, Mistress Tresham, for the last time, know you, or know you not, where your brother is?"

"I do," said Agatha, in a low but firm voice.

"And where is he, then?"

"Nay," she replied, "that shall you never hear from me; and none else knoweth."

Nynd turned pale with rage. "And pray, mistress, did you never hear that we had certain ways and means to make dumb people speak?" he said.

"I have," said Agatha: "God forgive you for speaking of them. Me, however, by God's help, they shall not move: and I think you would hardly dare to try them."

"Now, by my faith, Master Nynd," said the rector, "I will not do your masters, bad as they are, the wrong to deem that they will not punish you for this insolence, an it came to their ears."

"O! horrid blasphemy!" said Chankley. "He hath sworn by his faith, when his faith is not his own."

"Say you so? my master," said Mr. Tresham. "I know not what is my own—for you have left me nothing else—if faith be not."

"How can that be," returned the other, "when Scripture saith it is the gift of God?"

"Well," replied the rector, "and for that very

reason it is my own; for what gives a man a greater right to any thing than a free gift?"

"Silence!" vociferated White. "Now Mistress Tresham, will you tell us this matter at once, or must we force the secret from you, by means which might be more profitable than pleasant?"

Agatha's answer was prevented by the entrance of a most unexpected personage, to account for whose appearance we must go back a little in the course of our narrative.

CHAPTER VII.

It was with a glad heart that, after receiving his final instructions from Lenthall, and being especially charged not to lose unnecessary time, Basil set forth on the Friday afternoon which preceded the Sunday whose events we have been narrating. He was mounted on a strong horse, used to long journeys; the little wealth he had amassed, and the few necessaries which he had provided, were in his saddle-bag; and he carried his pistols, loaded, at his holster. After having duly exhibited his pass at the Bishop's-gate, which then stood where Bishopsgate-street Without joins Bishopsgate-street Within, he could not but notice, as he rode along Shoreditch, the excitement which seemed to prevail among all classes; and he thought that the general presentiment on the part of the parliamentary faction seemed to be one of dread. As he paused on Cricklewood-hill, to breathe his horse, and gazed on the huge tower of S. Paul's,

standing out in noble relief against the pale blue of the southern sky, his thoughts dwelt bitterly on the sin and misery into which he had fallen while dwelling in that great city which he was now leaving, perhaps for ever, and he inwardly determined to use his utmost talents and energy to repair the mischief which he had done by advice and example; and by devoting himself to the King's and the Church's cause, to make amends for the assistance he had once given to their adversaries. His lonely journey gave him the greater scope for such reflections: the road appeared almost deserted, and patches of grass were here and there growing in its very centre. The little town of Barnet was as quiet as if it had been stricken with the plague; hardly a soul came to the door of their houses as Basil passed through; and he urged his horse faster over Hadley Heath, meditating more deeply than ever before on the guilt and misery of civil war.

The sun was just setting, and the distant Bedfordshire hills seemed to burn in purple, when Basil caught his first sight of the huge massy tower of S. Alban's Abbey Church; and half an hour more sufficed to conduct him to the gate of the Black Bull, then the principal hostelry in the place.

Master Aminadab Sole, the landlord, who was, to use his own expression, a faithful witness to the truth in these degenerate times, received our traveller with the respect which his appearance demanded; and having ushered him into the long, low, dark,

common room, damp from neglect and desertion, left him, to bring the materials for a fire, which the chilliness of an evening in the early part of June rendered not undesirable. Having with some difficulty forced the wet straw and wood into a blaze, he proceeded to enquire, whether his honour would partake of his supper then, or stay till the usual hour—eight o'clock.

"I should prefer waiting," Basil replied; "and in the meantime," he added, "perhaps you could furnish me with some books. I love not to be idle."

"Would not your worship prefer to step down to Stephen's Church, where godly Master Hews is even now exercising? He hath ever some comfortable crumb for a gracious soul. Last evening he was on that of Paul, about the man of sin, which he did expound of that arch-heretic, William Laud. To-night he doth further show wherein the abominations of prelacy do consist, and willeth his hearers to cut it up root and branch."

"By your good leave," returned Tresham, "I will abide where I am, being somewhat tired with my day's ride. But, an you will bring me some books, I shall be bounden to you."

"Such as I have," replied Aminadab, "shall be at your service; but they be rather to the edifying of faith, than such light and wanton books as the Malignants care for—plays and poems, and such like harlotry. I will go fetch some."

He soon returned with a bundle of tracts and

pamphlets ; and having promised Basil to summon him when supper should be ready, left him alone. Tresham, who was heartily weary of his own sad thoughts, placed himself on the cushioned seat of the deep bow-window, and began to examine the volumes, all of which bore evident traces of careful and repeated perusal. They were, as might be expected, all of the most malignant stamp, addressed to the worst passions of the people, and violently inflammatory. The first he looked at was called, "The Great Eclipse, or Charles his wain overclouded ; otherwise, Great Charles, our gracious King, eclipsed by the destructive persuasions of his queen, by the pernicious aspects of his cabinet council, and by the subtil insinuations of the Popish Faction, Priests, Jesuits, and others. As also from the firing of towns, the shedding of innocent blood, and the lives of his subjects." It was embellished with a frontispiece, representing the King reposing on an easy chair, and at his leisure maiming and mutilating five or six prisoners, while a house was burning near him. The motto was, "The subjects' blood, with fire and sword, cries, Vengeance ! Lord." Then, again, there was a tract, called, "A Catalogue of remarkable mercies conferred upon the seven associated counties.—Printed by command of Edward, Earl of Manchester, and appointed to be published in the several parish churches of the forenamed counties." There was also, "The Parliament's Calendar of Black Saints." "The relation of a combustion

in S. Anne's Church, Aldersgate, between a Jesuit and a preacher." "The two godly Petitions of the county of Buckingham." "Articles of Impeachment against Bishop Wren." "The Papists' Bloody Massacre." "The Archbishop's cruelty to Mr. Edw. Rood, of Abingdon." "The 47th number (the last then published) of the Parliamentary Newspaper, called, The Scottish Dove sent out." "Newes from Scotland, or the Beast is wounded." At last, seeing a small tract, called, "Rome's ABC," embellished with a portrait of Laud, he took it up. I will make a few extracts from it, by way of showing the inhumanity and brutality with which the *conscientious* Puritans persecuted the aged Archbishop, when he was ill, alone, unprotected, imprisoned, and within a few weeks of his execution.

"We desire your Lordship now at length to grow humble; but what need we petition that, insomuch as long since we knew you were so, or what was the meaning of your lowly bowing? Next, we petition your honour upon Sabbath-days not to walk abroad too much; the zeal which you owe to Lambeth Church be sure to pay it to the Tower Chapel. Next, have a care of your lawn sleeves, lest unawares they chance for to choke you. Next, we desire your honour not to be forgetful of your mortality, which we think you should not,—your chamber having so fair a prospect towards Tower Hill."

"I could not have believed," said Basil, as he threw down the book, "that any man professing

Christianity would so brutally have trampled over a fallen enemy, let him be never so worthy of hatred."

By this time the landlord made his appearance to announce supper; and Basil, on taking his place at the table, found it occupied by his host's family, and by the minister who had just been lecturing at S. Stephen's, Lewis Hews. He was then looking out for some desirable piece of preferment, which he considered himself nobly to have earned by a pamphlet he had some years previously published, under the title of "Certain Grievances," and which, being written in popular language, and with some degree of wit, was said to have produced considerable effect on the minds of many,—though its objections were the thrice-told slanders of Cartwright, Penry, and others, and the arguments not worth the name. From this man, Basil learnt that the county of Hertford was in general disposed to favour the rebels; but that the town of S. Alban's was, as he phrased it, "a very laystall of Prelacy and Profanity. And well might it be," he continued, "when that large house of Rimmon stood in the very midst of it. A right godly work it would be to batter it down, save some small portion, which might be left for the edification of hungry souls; and the proceeds of the rest might be given to the poor, or to painful ministers."

"This he said," thought Basil, "not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief. And

hear you nought, my Masters," he added, aloud, "of a battle towards? Men say, in London, that a few days more will in likelihood let us know somewhat further than we do now of such matters."

"I think," said the preacher, "that there will be no change for this present. Opening my Bible this morning, as is my wont when I would fain gain some glimpse of the future, at random, I did light on the text, 'And the battle passed over to Bethaven.' Wherefore, I opine that so crowning a mercy will not as yet be vouchsafed to us."

Conversation like this concluded the evening; and Basil, on calling for his bill, that nothing might detain him on the morrow, found that his host had ingeniously contrived to cram in every possible item, fair or unfair, and to double charge each. Remonstrance was in vain; for Master Sole would have thought it a mere tempting of Providence to miss so fair an opportunity of fleecing a traveller. This innkeeper, who attended every "exercise" held in S. Alban's, was well known by his unhappy customers to be one of the most shameless cheats in ordinary affairs that ever existed. So true is Walker's account of this party—"their ends, their means, their sayings, their demeanours, were sanctified,—every thing but their hearts."

Starting at a very early hour on the following morning, Basil, who was anxious to make the best of his journey, reached Newport Pagnell about midday. A knot of countrymen were assembled at the

door of the inn where he alighted, and from them he heard that the King and Fairfax had ere this met. The most contradictory rumours prevailed: some would have it that the King had been slain; others, that Fairfax had been taken prisoner, and would be beheaded as a traitor; others again brought forward old prophecies, pointing out the year 45, as one fatal to England; all, however, agreed that the two armies had met somewhere near Northampton. Basil, in an agony of impatience to know the worst, looked in despair at his horse, who by his long hot journey over the sandy Bedfordshire hills was much fatigued, and with some difficulty persuaded the host to lend him a far inferior beast, which stood in his stables, taking his own in pledge: and with this he pushed on as fast as he might. At Stoke Golding, he heard that "rebellion had bad luck;" and as he advanced northward the rumour became better and better authenticated; nor was it till he reached Wootton, a short distance only from Northampton, that he was led at all to doubt of the accuracy of his information. At the latter town, where he did not arrive till after dusk, he heard the whole truth; and it being impracticable, in the then infested and dangerous state of the roads, to proceed, he took up his quarters in an obscure hostelry, and counted almost every hour as it struck, in his anxiety to learn what fate had befallen Scaldwell and its dear inhabitants.

It was he, then, who on the following afternoon (for the "conscientiousness" of a village blacksmith,

who would not replace a shoe which his horse had lost, considerably delayed him) entered the parsonage at the time to which our story has arrived. He heard in the village of the result of the committee, and of the outrages which were being carried on in his father's house; and perhaps it was well for him that he had no time to indulge his feelings on again entering it, nor to reflect how deeply he had sinned, and how bitterly he had suffered, since he last stood within it. Armed with Lenthall's authority, and well known to White, he found little difficulty in clearing the house of its intruders for the present; and then the astonishment and mingled sorrow and joy which followed, when he confessed the crime he had been guilty of, and the anguish he had suffered in consequence, are scarcely to be described. After the first burst of emotion was over, he eagerly enquired what course of action his father intended to pursue. "For," he said, "I am sure that, humanly speaking, the Royal Cause is ruined for the present; and though I may be able to protect you here for a day or two, as soon as the news of my disobeying orders, and hastening to Scaldwell instead of to Naseby, is known, I shall be in more danger than any one else."

"Oh that Herbert were here!" said Agatha. "Would there be no possibility of getting his advice?"

"Where is he?" asked Basil. "If anywhere near, by all means let us send for him."

"At Kettering," replied his sister. "Sergeant Fletcher, I am sure, will ride so far for us. I have the direction. I am sure he will be able to discover him."

While the sergeant was on his errand, which he performed with hearty good will, Basil received from his father an account of the whole proceedings of the Committee, and more especially of Nynd's villainy; and bitterly did he lament that, at the very moment when his connexion with the rebels might have been turned to some good use, the precariousness of his own situation, and the very doubtful tenure on which he held such influence as he had, prevented his taking any notice of the offence.

Sergeant Fletcher executed his commission with as much skill as fidelity; and in little less than two hours after he left the rectory, Herbert Tresham and Colonel Trelawney gallopped up to it. Then came all the joy and sorrow of a second meeting; and next a long and earnest consultation followed on the future plans of the family. The two officers were to repair to Oxford on the following day, and were very desirous that Mr. Tresham and his daughters should share their destiny, whatever it was. The rector himself was unwilling to leave the village where he had so long lived, and the flock among whom he had so unremittingly laboured; but he fully saw the danger of remaining, especially in a place where Adkyns, whose character was notoriously bad, was to be put in possession of the rectory. He was also

forced to allow that his presence in Scaldwell could be but of little avail; whereas every fresh Royalist who swelled the mass at Oxford, exerted an influence which elsewhere he could not hope to have. While he was wavering, Colonel Trelawney rose and said, "Master Tresham, if you would take a turn with me in the garden this fine evening, I should be much obliged to you."

The two paced up and down the well-trimmed gravel walk for the better part of an hour. Trelawney spoke earnestly to his host of the gloomy prospect that awaited the Church and Her true children; he dwelt on his own strong and long-tried affection for Agatha; he pleaded that Mr. Tresham had sanctioned it himself in happier times; he set forth, as delicately as he could, the delight it would give him to have a right to protect the whole family, and to devote what the commissioners might leave of his estate to their use; and finally pleaded so well and so wisely, that, ere they returned to the house, Mr. Tresham had given his consent, provided Agatha's could be won, to their union, as soon as they should have reached Oxford.

Colonel Trelawney then invited Agatha into the garden; and when they again appeared among the family circle, it took no long time to arrange definitively future plans. It was settled that the whole party should, on the following morning, set forth on their journey to Oxford with Basil, whose pass and known character would, they hoped, protect them:

and that the two officers, who were too notorious to be able thus to escape detection, should make the best of their way, by bye-roads, and under such disguise as they could best assume, and join them there; and that as soon as possible after they had reached that loyal city, Trelawney's wishes should no longer be delayed.

CHAPTER VIII.

We shall now pass over a period of two months: and, in order that we may have a clearer view of the posture in which affairs stood at its expiration, will briefly recapitulate the events which happened within it. The Royal Cause was fast falling; disaster after disaster befel it, and, far from the jars and discontents of its partizans being consolidated by misfortune, fresh heart-burnings and jealousies were continually breaking out. The West, which had hitherto been its strong-hold, was every day becoming more and more disloyal; the excesses committed by Sir Richard Grenville and Lord Goring, the association of free bands, under the title of club-men, the apathy, and disunion, and selfishness, which generally prevailed, all tended to alienate the affections of the people from their King, and to render them an easier

prey to the victorious arms of the Parliament. Then the disastrous battle of Petherton bridge, where, through some mistake, in the night, two Royalist officers attacked each other; the defeat of Goring and Lamport, by Fairfax; the raising the siege of Taunton, the surrender of Bridgewater, the capture of Leicester and Hereford, all convinced men that the long protracted struggle was drawing to an end. The King, by a fatal indecision, instead of showing himself at the head of the troops yet faithful to him, lingered in Wales, losing the precious weeks in vainly endeavouring to raise a fresh army there; and allowing his generals in the West to wrangle about titles, and commissions, and precedency. Yet, depressed as he was, betrayed by his friends, and not knowing where to look for advice, Charles, at the beginning of the month of August, wrote thus to Prince Rupert, and the letter is worthy of a King and a Martyr.

"I confess, that speaking either as to mere soldier or statesman, I must say, there is no probability but of my ruin: but as to a Christian, I must tell you, God will not suffer rebels to prosper, nor His cause to be overthrown; and whatsoever personal punishment it shall please Him to inflict upon me, must not make me repine, much less give over this quarrel; which, by the grace of God, I am resolved against, whatsoever it cost me; for I know my obligations, both in conscience and honour, to be neither to forsake God's cause, injure my successors, nor abandon my friends. Indeed, I cannot flatter myself with ex-

pectation of success, more than this, to end my days with honour and a good conscience: which obliges me to continue my endeavours, as not despairing that God may in good time avenge His own cause, though I must avow to all my friends, that he that will stay with me at this time must expect and resolve, either to die for the good cause, or, which is worse, to live as miserable in the maintaining it, as the violence of insulting rebels can make him."

It being evident that the last stake to be thrown for would be the possession of Bristol, both as the second city in the kingdom, and the key of the West, and also as being the only place of importance which still held for the Royalists, both parties turned their attention, at the close of the summer, towards its attack and defence. Among other officers ordered thither were Trelawney and Tresham, after a very brief stay at Oxford. Agatha Trelawney, unwilling to leave her husband in such a service of danger, was yet most reluctant to be separated from her father and sister: and Mr. Tresham, having now no local tie, nor family attachment, consented to accompany his two sons to their new place of sojourn. They were also followed by Basil, whose desertion from the parliamentary side had given occasion to the bitterest expressions of indignation and threats of revenge among his former friends, and who now hoped, by turning to some civil employment, to be able to serve his King zealously and ably.

It was towards the end of July that our party

took up their abode in Bristol. They found every thing in active preparation for supporting a long siege: provisions were daily brought into the city, arms and ammunition provided, bullets being cast, and the weak parts of the walls repaired and strengthened. Herbert sought and obtained a private interview with the Prince, to whom he stated the past errors and present desires of Basil; and the latter was at once set over the victualling department, hitherto but ineffectually supplied.

Orders had already been issued, that every family should victual itself for six months; but, on close enquiry, Basil discovered that out of 2,500 families then remaining in the city, 1,500 were not able to provide any provisions whatever. To remedy this, two thousand bushels of corn were imported from Wales, and numerous herds of cattle were driven in every day from the surrounding country, by parties appointed for that purpose.

Trelawney and Tresham found active employment in superintending the repairs of the works. The line to be defended was more than four miles in circumference, and the available force did not exceed 2000 men. Some difference of opinion at first existed, whether the city should be defended alone, or the possession of the whole of the outworks also maintained: the latter course was at last agreed upon, because it was hoped that if one general attack could be resisted, the enemy would be discouraged, and the lateness of the season prevent another from

being attempted. The city walls themselves were of no great extent: the river Frome bounded it on the west and north, the Avon on the south, and a line of fortifications, extending from the Castle Green to the upper part of the Old Market, on the east. But the outworks formed a far larger circumference: containing part of Brandon hill, S. Michael's hill, S. James's-square, the whole of the Old Market, and the Temple, and S. Mary Redcliffe. They were defended by five principal works: Prior's hill Fort, Colston's Fort, the Great or Royal Fort, Brandon hill Fort, and the Water Fort. The walls were generally about three feet thick, and five in height. The men worked day and night in repairing the decayed parts: there was no time to cut and level the hedges and ditches near, from which the rebels afterwards derived great benefit.

Mr. Tresham, and Agatha and Rose, took up their abode in Corn-street, in a central position; and, as there was often a difficulty in being able to attend the Cathedral, on account of the military operations carrying on along the river, which intervened between it and the city, he asked and obtained leave from Bishop Howell to perform daily service in S. Stephen's Church, which was left by the then rector: and the attendance was very full both morning and afternoon.

Anxious as they were for the success of the defence, and anxiously impatient for the first tidings of the enemy's approach, the evenings which the whole party spent together after the business of the day was over, were yet gilded by a happiness which, since Basil's

falling away, had been wanting. The two officers anticipated bright success: they knew well Prince Rupert's courage and military talents, and hoped that his besetting sin, rashness, would be effectually kept under by his present position. Mr. Tresham, of less sanguine temperament, nevertheless thought that the Royal cause would be gaining strength and consistency elsewhere, while the enemy was detained before Bristol: and the sisters, taking their opinions from those they loved best, were not unwilling to make the most of their present domestic happiness, and to let the morrow take thought for the things of itself.

On the twentieth of August it was generally known through the city, that the enemy, under Fairfax and Cromwell, were advancing from the east: that Commissary-general Ireton had taken possession of most of the small towns and villages near the city, and that orders had been sent to Admiral Moulton, then at Milfordhaven, to blockade Bristol by sea. Two days afterwards the first body of the enemy appeared on Pile-hill: and that afternoon the whole party were summoned by the officers for a walk on the Southern Ramparts. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the scene. Far away to the south, the blue hills of Somersetshire slept in the quiet, hazy sunshine; the enemy were distinctly visible on a nearer eminence; to the right, that queen of parish churches, S. Mary Redcliffe, stood out in noble relief; behind, the various towers and spires of the city were grouped together, and, high above all, the Royal Standard

floated lazily from the top of the Castle. Here and there a low dray, loaded with cannon balls, was being dragged along the ramparts, and the distant line of the outworks was partially visible on some of the eminences to the right. All the sounds of a busy city were borne along with the breeze; carts, heavily loaded with stone, rumbled through the narrow streets, or a light piece of artillery rattled along, as it was moved to another locality; sometimes the clanking of a small party of horse might be heard; and an occasional laugh or jest sounded along the wall. In the midst of all these preparations for war, the House of Peace continued as usual, and the Cathedral bells were chiming for evening service.

"How very, very beautiful is all this!" said Agatha, at length. "Oh that its beauty should be what it is!"

"It is a city," replied her husband, "worthy to be that in which a King's last hopes should be fixed. I am sure that it will not disappoint his trust."

"And how long," asked Rose, "do you really expect to be able to make its defence good?"

"For six months, we trust," he replied; "but the Prince hath promised his Majesty to hold it four. And long before that time, I trust, the King will be enabled to raise the siege."

"And where, my dear husband," said Agatha, "would be your post, in case of an attack?"

"It will be," answered he, "in the opposite part

of the city, a good mile and a half hence. Prior's-hill-fort. It is not the largest of the forts, but it is one which will probably be the first object of the enemy; and the Prince has much honoured us by appointing us thither."

"How popular he seems to be," remarked Agatha. "The people crowd round to get a sight of him when he comes forth, and appear never to be weary of gazing on him."

"And his demeanour is right gracious to them," said Rose. "I had always heard him called haughty and overbearing; to them, I am sure, he is quite the contrary."

"Haughty enough he can be," said Herbert; "no one more so; but he knows the way to win men's hearts, and is practising it now."

"Look, Charles! look!" exclaimed Agatha, "that gate is being thrown open! What is that body of horse going to do? and what is that trumpet?"

"The Prince hath commanded a sortie this afternoon," her husband replied. "Sir Richard Crane heads it. A right gallant man is he, and I doubt not will dislodge the enemy, safe enough as they think themselves, from yonder hill."

The little body of horse wound under the wall, and Sir Richard, as he passed, bowed low to the party on the ramparts, who returned his salutation.

"He shall sup with us to-night," said Trelawney, as he walked back to their lodgings. "He is a

brave man as ever lived, and will have some notable feat to tell us of."

In less than an hour the Royalists were driven back into the city in some confusion; but Sir Richard Crane returned no more: he received his mortal wound in charging up the hill.

On the Sunday morning which followed, the city began to assume the appearance of a beleaguered place. A heavy cannonade was heard from the north all the morning, the great fort, and Prior's-hill fort, firing continually. So mournful a service Agatha had never before attended. At the moment her father was commencing the Church prayers, her husband and brother were heading a sally from the Prior's sally-port; and never did the petition seem more seasonable—"That it may please Thee to succour, help, and comfort, all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation,"—than now. On returning home, she had the joy of finding a note from Trelawney, to the effect, that though they had been repulsed by Colonel Ramsborough's brigade, yet he and Herbert were unhurt. Then followed all the alarms of a formed siege. On the Monday, information was received of an intrigue carrying on within the city, to betray it to the Parliament; several suspected persons were seized and imprisoned, and the design thus nipped in the bud. On the Tuesday, a very vigorous sally was made against Colonel Weldon's quarters, at Bedminster: Sir Bernard Ashley, a gallant Royalist, fell in it. On the Thurs-

day, the fort at Portishead was taken; and thus a communication opened with the ships in Kingroad. The Friday was observed by the rebels as a fast, to implore the blessing of Providence on their designs: the exercise of Master Peters and Master Dell was sadly interrupted by a sally which the Prince headed about noon.

It was well known that the enemy was concerting a general storm of the city; and that preparations, though much interrupted by the continual succession of wet weather, were still carrying on vigorously; that cannon baskets were ordered to be filled, ladders making, and seamen and soldiers sent for. On the Thursday, a bridge having been completed across the Avon, and the enemy's quarters thus joined, a flag of truce was sent into the city, which brought a summons to surrender. Fairfax had the impudence to tell Prince Rupert that the surrender would be an act glorious in itself, and joyful to all parties, for the restoring the love of the people and Parliament of England, the truest friends to the King and his family. "But if," he continued, "this be hid from your eyes, and so great, so famous, and so ancient a city, so full of people, be exposed, through your wilfulness in putting us to force the same, to ruin and extremity of war (which yet we shall in that case as much as possible endeavour to prevent), then I appeal to the righteous God to judge between you and us, and to requite the wrong; and let all England judge whether to burn its houses, and ruin its

cities, and destroy its people, be a good requital from a person of your family, which have had the prayers, tears, money, and blood of this Parliament."

If Fairfax, undoubtedly the most conscientious among the rebels, could write in this strain, we may form some conjecture as to the distortions which the truth received from persons less troubled with scrupulosity, and, therefore, fitter agents for the Parliament.

Prince Rupert returned the following answer, not unwilling to procure some time by negotiation, in order to carry on a yet unfinished work :—

"Sir,—I received yours by the trumpet, and desire to know if you will give me leave to send a message to the King, to know his pleasure therein.

"I am,

"Your servant,

"Rupert."

"Sept. 4, 1645."

To this proposition, Fairfax would not consent; the negotiation however pended a few days more; and it was not till the evening of Tuesday, the 9th of September, that it was finally broken off, by the Prince's sending an absolute negative to the enemy's last proposals.

As soon as the answer was dispatched, Tresham and his friend repaired to their lodgings, to prepare those dearest to them for the approaching attack.

"Cheer up, my own Agatha," said Trelawney, as

he bade her farewell; "this, after all, will be nothing to Naseby; and GOD, who protected us then, will, I nothing doubt, protect us now. Whatever happens, it will be my comfort that you are safe with your father, and your brother: the case might have been different, and then I could not have gone to my post with half so light a heart."

"I can trust you, indeed I can, in GOD's hands," replied Agatha; "and you too, my dearest Herbert. Only, the moment you are able to send us any news of your safety, I am sure we may depend on having it."

"Rest assured you may," said her husband. "Perhaps the attack may be of no long duration; but at all events, I entreat you earnestly, let what may happen, not to stir from this house till you see or hear from us. You can be nowhere so safe; and it may be important that I should know where at once to find you."

"It is a noble thought, Charles," said Mr. Tresham; "and you must feel it your greatest comfort, that you are fighting on GOD's side, that GOD's people are praying for you, that the Church Herself blesses you, that all the influence prayer has,—and who can tell how much that is?—is exerted for you; and that if you fall, many a canonized Martyr—I speak it not to disparage those Blessed Saints—hath less a claim to that title than you will have. There, now go; and GOD's grace and protection be with you both!"

Agatha and Rose exerted themselves to appear calm and composed till the two officers were gone; but then,—and who could blame them for it?—they wept, to quote the beautiful language of Scripture, till they had no more power to weep.

The evening wore away, and a dark still night came on,—far better suited to the wishes of the besiegers than to those of the besieged. Trelawney and Tresham endeavoured to inspirit the men in their little fort: it mounted thirteen guns. They were in high spirits, and made no doubt that the defence would be successful; and the feeling was much the same all round the outworks.

Sir Thomas Fairfax, who had taken up his quarters at an old small farm-house nearly opposite to Prior's fort, was busied the whole evening in giving his final directions. Two regiments of horse were stationed on Durdham Down, to intercept the Prince's flight, should he attempt to desert his charge; and one occupied the little village of Clifton with a similar design. Minute directions were sent to the officers, the pass-word given out, and then, for an hour or two, all was silence on both sides. Mr. Tresham and his daughters began to hope that their alarm had been premature; the fire, which (for the nights were beginning to grow chilly) they had more than once replenished, grew low; and still there was no sign of any unusual movement. The Cathedral clock at length chimed two; a few seconds afterwards a long pale blaze shot up from the heights

of Clifton, and four great guns being fired at the same moment against Prior's-hill fort, the storm began all round the city in about twenty places at once. The first attack was hottest between Temple-gate and the Avon,—as nearly as possible where the terminus of the Great Western Railway now stands. In this line of wall, three places were stormed by Colonel Weldon, with his brigade of three regiments. The whole operation was conducted with the utmost skill and courage: at each place were two hundred men in the middle, with two hundred on each side, forlorn hopes, to begin the storm; two ladders, each carried by two men, and attended by two sergeants; twelve files of men with fire-arms and pikes, to follow the ladders; twenty pioneers to throw down the walls when the breach should be made, so as to allow the entrance of the horse; and a small party to turn the guns, when captured, on the city. This attack, however, was unsuccessful: Prince Rupert met it in person,—and who could hope to resist his impetuosity? Lauford's-gate, standing on the Bath Road,—the weakest part of the whole line,—was less fortunate; Colonel Montague forced his way into it about three o'clock. The seamen had been ordered by Admiral Moulton to advance by water; but the tide failing, they joined themselves to Colonel Whalley's regiment. The great struggle took place on the line between Colston's fort and Prior's-hill; just where S. James's-street now stands. In spite of the incessant fire directed by Trelawney and

Tresham, with Major Price, against the rebels, the forlorn hope, commanded by Captain Ireton, succeeded in making a breach, after a murderous combat of two hours; and the pioneers having quickly made it practicable, the horse entered with undaunted courage. They were charged by a small body of royalist cavalry, commanded by Colonel Taylor, who had formerly been a member of the House of Commons, and but recently returned to his allegiance. This officer was mortally wounded in the very onset, his men were thrown into confusion, and kept up the character attached to the Royal Cavalry all through the war,—that though they charged with the greatest fury at first, when once disheartened, they never could be brought to action again; whereas the rebels might be rallied again and again, and advanced as steadily as at the beginning. In the present instance, they quite retreated from the scene, and sheltered themselves under the great fort. Thus a considerable part of the line fell into the hands of the rebels; but Prior's-hill fort obstinately held out for two hours; the guns became nearly red-hot from continual firing, and the men were ready to faint with their exertion; yet there was not a mention made of surrendering. The Roundheads crept up to the portholes, and plied them with musketry, the fort playing on them fiercely with both great and small shot, till the ladders were brought up. These proving too short, a terrible carnage took place, while two were being fastened together. The roy-

alists held out with the greatest constancy, knowing that if they could only keep the fort till daylight,—and light was beginning to break in the east,—Colston's fort would bring its guns to bear on the enemy, which now was impossible, lest the fire should have injured some of the Royalists. Of this the rebels were also aware, and therefore redoubled their efforts; some actually crept in at the port-holes, others got to the top of the works. Captain Lagoe, of Colonel Pride's regiment, was the first to seize the colours; and the royalists then abandoning the upper part ran below, and attempted to barricade themselves on the ground story. This lasted but about five minutes; then the enemy burst in both from above and at the side, and the besieged, finding themselves surrounded by tenfold numbers, threw down their arms, and begged for quarter. No quarter, however, was at first shown; Major Price was butchered in cold blood: and five only, among whom were Trelawney and Tresham, were taken prisoners.

Light broke: the whole of the outworks were in the hands of the rebels: the city was on fire in several places; the soldiery thoroughly disheartened, and every one disposed to forebode evil. For once, Rupert's spirits were broken: and within four hours after the capture of Prior's-hill Fort he demanded a parley.

Trelawney and Tresham had been kept under guard in the same house which formed Fairfax's head-

quarters; at about seven in the morning they were informed that he wished to communicate with them, and were accordingly ushered into the room where he sat. He was surrounded by several of the Parliamentary officers, all actively engaged in the business of a very substantial breakfast.

"Gentlemen," he said, rising to meet them as he spoke, "I can only express my hearty sorrow, so far as respects yourselves, for the fate which has thrown you into my power, and my regret that the skill and courage you displayed last night—and I never saw greater skill, or more determined courage—was not exerted in a better cause, than in fighting against the constitution of England, and the liberties of her inhabitants. If you will so far honour me as to partake of my poor fare, I will set forth the reasons which moved me to request your company."

The officers having accepted the invitation, Fairfax proceeded. "Prince Rupert hath agreed to certain articles of capitulation, which will shortly be signed, so that the siege is virtually at an end."

"Of capitulation!" exclaimed Tresham: "impossible! The city is defensible for months, notwithstanding the loss of the outworks; the Prince can never think of surrendering it."

"Such notwithstanding is the case," answered the General; "I will show you the draught of the articles. 'The Prince to march out with all the honours of war; to have safe convoy to any garrison he shall name within fifty miles of Bristol; the city

to be surrendered before one o'clock to-morrow; the prisoners instantly set free, and hostages given on both sides.' You see, gentlemen, there is no cause for doubt."

"It is true," replied Herbert, "that we did not think you would have gained such an advantage on last night. But I would sooner cut off my right hand than sign those articles; and if the Prince does it, I am sure that he will be called to account for it."

"I am sorry that, in that case, I shall be compelled to detain you with me till the whole is formally signed; for right grieved should I be that any thing should intervene which might throw difficulties in the way of so Christian a work."

"You will act as you please," replied Trelawney; "but most surely, whenever and wherever, I shall not cease to protest against so infamous a surrender of our best hopes."

Fairfax, whose temper, naturally hasty, was admirably under his control, did not seem distressed, but only observed—

"The ransom of each will be fixed at a thousand crowns, but as it may not be easy for you at once to raise such a sum, I shall feel pleasure in taking your word for it, and releasing you from your present uncomfortable situation. But, at the same time after the sentiments which you have just expressed, I shall feel it my duty to detain you till the capitulation is actually signed."

The grief with which the King received the news

of the surrender of Bristol, a place of such importance for the support of his sinking fortunes, and the odium which Prince Rupert incurred for surrendering a post, that he had promised to maintain for four months, are well known. The rebels, after taking possession of the city, appointed a day of solemn thanksgiving for the success which had been vouchsafed to their arms. The cruelty with which Bishop Howell, a man universally beloved and esteemed, was treated, would alone surpass belief, were it not well attested. His lady was then recovering from her confinement: the rebels uncased the palace of all its lead, so that she was exposed to the weather day and night. He himself was pulled violently out of his palace, which they made into a malt-house, and entertained the idea of erecting a kiln where the High Altar stood. He did not long survive their barbarous usage: but dying of grief, was buried in the south aisle of his own Cathedral. And he has no monument, but a plain black slab, whereon is engraven the single word—EXPERGISCAR.

CHAPTER IX.

"The tyrannous and bloody deed is done :
The most arch-piece of cruel massacre
That ere this lower world was guilty of."

RICHARD III.

IT is the melancholy task of the historian, and not ours, to trace the gradual steps, from the defeat at Chester to the dispersion of the last royalist body under Lord Ashley, which led to the total downfal of the Royal Cause. We will rather pursue the fortunes of the family, whose tale we have been relating, to their close.

It was a gloomy evening, at the beginning of February, 1649 ; daylight had just faded away over Scaldwell, the wind was beginning to rise, and the clouds drifted rapidly over the moon. The church, in its outward appearance, was little altered since we last saw it ; but, in the interior, every thing, from the demolished Roodscreen and open roof, to the newly erected and cumbrous pews, showed traces of Puritan ravages. The parsonage was fast falling

into decay; for Master Adkyns, discontented at not having obtained a better piece of preferment, and fearful of being (as at no very distant period was indeed the case) ejected in his turn, to make way for an independent, would not be at the trouble of bestowing on it the necessary repairs. The whole village seemed to have changed its character; want, and desolation, and filth, had made their appearance where all before was neatness and comfort; the merry open English faces of the former inhabitants had given way to the sour Genevan cast of the precisest Puritanism:

> "Still so perverse and opposite,
> As if they worshipped God for spite."

The labourer no longer went forth to his daily toil, whistling some merry tune, and as cheerful as the lark which was singing above him; but with discontented and melancholy steps, as if it were hard that while so many, not originally his superiors, had, in the late changes, risen to wealth and power, he should still remain in the drudgery to which he was born. The church, formerly almost too small to contain all the worshippers, would now have held double the number that attended. The Directory was hated by all: those who had complained of the length of the Church prayers, found that they gained little in this respect by the adoption of a form of worship, where the heads of prayer alone took up ten closely printed quarto pages; and the commen-

tary on this might, at the discretion of the minister, be expanded to ten times its length. Those who had objected to the repetition in the former prayers, now discovered that repetition of the same words was better than repetition of the same ideas in different terms, and the introduction of the favourite expressions and pet phrases of the officiating minister became ludicrously painful. The occasional offices were vehemently disliked. Sergeant Fletcher observed, that he had never looked on those as honest women who had been married by the Directory (the sergeant only repeated King James's famous declaration at the Hampton Court Conference, that he should hardly think himself well married without the ring); "and as to the burial," he would continue, "it is more like the burial of a dog than a Christian being." And very many agreed with the honest sergeant in these views, though they might not perhaps express them so strongly.

But to return. On the evening we have mentioned, an old man, but apparently more infirm through sorrow than through years, and a lady, who, though still young, wore the deep mourning of a widow, might have been seen entering the churchyard of Scaldwell. They paused before a low modest headstone, on which were engraven the letters,—"R. T. 1648," and stood beside it for some moments without speaking.

"Dear, dear Rose!" said Agatha Trelawney, at

length,—for she it was who, with her father, was paying the first visit to her sister's grave; "it is better as it is for both of us. It was a sorer trial even to me to see you pining away day by day, and to be unable to procure you the medicine and necessaries which might perchance have saved your life, than to know that you are now at rest, though it be in 'the land that is very far off.' And for you, oh how incomparably glorious is the change!"

"Glorious indeed!" said Mr. Tresham; "glorious indeed! It has been a merciful stroke,—merciful both to her and to us. All our privations we suffered far more for her than we did for ourselves; and she felt them the more, because she saw that we did so. Now she has done with suffering for ever. And what a glorious company of those that have suffered in the same cause are there with her!"

"How unspeakably must those happy spirits pity us!" returned Agatha. "And how graciously is it ordered that we should have so many inducements to set our affections on things above! When my husband fell, it seemed as if I had not a single tie to bind me to earth; and I did not know how strong a band there was, till I watched by the sick bed of my Rose. And now, my dearest father, that you are left alone, and that Herbert and Basil are separated from us, there seems more need than ever that I should be your support and comfort."

"And so you are, my dearest child; without you,

this world would be indeed a wilderness to me. But who comes here?" he added, as two figures entered the wicket-gate, and approached rapidly.

"I have given you express orders, Master Tresham," said Adkyns, "not to loiter about this place, as I constantly find you doing. You have no longer —and I and the village bless GOD for it—any business here; I only wish you would take yourself off altogether."

"A pleasant time you have chosen for an evening walk, Mistress Trelawney," said his companion, who was none other than Nynd. "You would have been too late another evening; for I have given orders that that stone shall be removed to-morrow: I cannot, as churchwarden, allow such an eyesore to exist."

Agatha burst into tears.

"Stop a moment, Master Tresham," continued Nynd. "Have you heard the news from London? Charles Stuart was made a head shorter last Monday than he was before."

Though somewhat prepared for the possibility of such an occurrence, by the knowledge he had acquired of the proceedings of the High Court of Justice, the news were too much for Mr. Tresham, and he fainted away. Adkyns and Nynd walked off; and had it not been for the timely appearance of sergeant Fletcher, Agatha's perplexity would have been extreme.

"Don't take on so, my dear young lady; don't

take on so," said he, as he carried her father homewards. "Such a shock was enough to upset any one at first: and Mr. Tresham is not very strong; but give him time, and I doubt not he will get over it."

And the sergeant's words were fulfilled; though not till after a long illness. While she watched by the sick-bed of her father, in the miserable cottage, which had been for some time his abode, Agatha's thoughts naturally reverted to the past: for there was too little of promise in the future to induce her to look forward to that. After the capture of Bristol, our party had, with other loyalists, passed into Wales, and finally followed his Majesty to Chester. In the battle near that place, Trelawney was second in command under Sir Marmaduke Langdale, and was shot through the heart at the moment of his leading on his regiment to their first charge. The King showed the respect he bore to that officer by attending his funeral as a mourner, in Chester Cathedral, and paying a visit to Agatha shortly afterwards. When the war was virtually terminated, Colonel Tresham, who could only have been a burden to his father, passed over into Holland, to offer his services to the Prince; and Basil was established in London, as a secret agent for the Royalists. Trelawney's estate having been confiscated by the Rebels, Mr. Tresham and his daughters were reduced to extreme necessity; and having applied for his fifths from the Committee of Plundered Ministers, he ob-

tained, after some expense and great trouble, and a personal appearance in town, an order on Adkyns for their payment. To this order, however, Adkyns paid no attention; and Mr. Tresham, hopeless of procuring justice by another appeal, settled himself in a small cottage in a village where he had all his life resided; and made a shift to support himself by the kindness of friends, some of whom were nearly as poor as himself; and by now and then giving a few lessons to the sons of some neighbouring farmers. The hardships which she had undergone, and the privations to which she was exposed, proved too much for Rose's strength; she gradually sunk under them: and, in the second winter of her return to Scaldwell, was buried by the side of her mother. Mr. Tresham earnestly petitioned that he might be allowed to read the Burial Service over his daughter; and Adkyns consented, on payment of ten pounds. This, however, being a sum totally beyond the utmost efforts of both Mr. Tresham and Sergeant Fletcher to raise, though they offered to make it up in time, permission was refused: and Rose Tresham was committed to the ground without a Christian hope being expressed over her coffin, or a Christian prayer breathed over her tomb.

When Mr. Tresham was sufficiently recovered to be able to bear it, a letter was given him by Agatha, which during his illness had arrived from Basil. It contained a full account of the Martyrdom of King Charles, of which Basil had been an eye-witness;

and concluded nearly in the same terms as did that of Sancroft to his father. "The black act is done, which all the world wonders at, and which an age cannot expiate. The waters of the ocean we swim in cannot wash out the spots of that blood, than which none was ever spilt with greater guilt since the Son of God poured out His. And now we have nothing left but to importune the God to Whom vengeance belongs, that He would show forth Himself: and speedily account with these prodigious monsters, or else hasten His coming to judgment, and so put an end to these enormous crimes, which no words yet in use can read, or thought conceive, without horror and amazement."

Years rolled on, and brought with them few or no changes worthy of record. Adkyns was displaced to make way for an Independent, Orton; a man, if possible, of more degraded character than his predecessor. Colonel Tresham rose rapidly in dignities in foreign service, and was enabled from time to time to transmit sums of money for his father's use. Basil was concerned in every scheme and plot for the Restoration of the King: but though he never once slept in safety, he remained undiscovered in the very head-quarters of his enemies. Nynd, after a long course of successful villainy, was murdered one night by a servant, for the sake of the money which he had amassed.

The only other particular worthy of record, which happened during the miserable time of the common-

wealth, was an adventure which befel Sergeant Fletcher, shortly after the death of Cromwell. He was riding, at a late hour, one night over Naseby, when, to his astonishment, at the very summit of the Down, he saw the flashes of torches, and heard some snatches of military funeral music. Excessively terrified, he rode back at full speed to Scaldwell, where his story found no credence. He went over in broad day-light on the following morning—a bright day in September—but, except an appearance here and there of trampled grass, could find nothing to corroborate his belief that a considerable company had been there the night before. It was indeed rumoured that a regiment of horse, accompanied by a kind of car, had passed through Brixworth on the previous day: but little notice was taken of this circumstance; and the sergeant's story, though he continued to assert it till his dying day, was looked upon as a mere delusion of the imagination. Recent historical discoveries, however, have tended to confirm this statement; by making it at least probable that Cromwell's instructions were complied with, and he himself interred in that spot at Naseby, where he had turned the fate of the day, and thus laid the foundation of his own future greatness.

The 29th of May, 1660, not only restored her Church and her King to England, but brought back peace and happiness to many of her children. Herbert and Basil, having witnessed the triumphant procession from Blackheath, rode post to Scaldwell; and the family

circle, though on earth it could never again be entire, was once more no longer separated by civil strife.

It had been the earnest prayer of Mr. Tresham, that he might live to see the Church in England re-settled; and his desire was granted. Orton, the intruding minister, died—as some said, destroyed himself—before the Restoration; so that Mr. Tresham peaceably returned, immediately after that event, to the rectory. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated," though now in extreme old age; and he undertook the duties of a parish priest with undiminished vigour. He watched with intense interest the proceedings of the Savoy Conference; and when it was known that a revised edition of the Common Prayer was contemplated, he became most anxious, lest any undue concessions should be made. Before its appearance, he was confined to his bed by his last sickness; and more than once expressed his fears that he should not live to know what had been changed in it. By Basil's means, one of the earliest copies was forwarded from London; and Agatha was instantly summoned to undo the treasure.

Sitting down by her father's bedside, she read slowly and distinctly the preface. He expressed himself much pleased with several passages, and especially when she came to the sentence, "We are fully persuaded in our judgments, and we here submit it to the world, that the book, as it stood before established in law, doth not contain any thing contrary to the word of God, or to sound doctrine."

"That is a good confession to set out with," said the rector. "Is there any alteration in the Calendar?"

"Yes," replied Agatha; "we have two new Saints'-days, S. Paul and S. Barnabas."

"Very good indeed," said Mr. Tresham.

"I can find no alteration in the order for Daily Prayer, except the addition of a Collect for all sorts and conditions of men, and a General Thanksgiving."

"Well," said Mr. Tresham, when he had heard them, "they were not perhaps absolutely needed, but they are beautiful prayers,—and, if I am not mistaken, I can recognize my old friend, Sanderson, in the last."

"The Epistles and Gospels, I see," pursued Agatha, "are taken out of the Common Translation, but the Psalms are left."

"I should have been very sorry," remarked her father, "if they had been touched. They are more homely than King James's Translation; but there always seems to me much more heart and feeling in them."

"Here is an office for Adult Baptism," proceeded Agatha; "I am sure that will be much needed."

"Let me hear it," said Mr. Tresham. It was read, and he expressed himself much delighted with it.

"I can only find one more alteration," said Agatha, "and that is in the Communion Service,

where, before the Prayer for the Church Militant, a rubric is introduced, commanding the Priest THEN to set the Elements on the Altar; and in the Prayer itself, after 'we beseech Thee to accept these our alms,' the words, '*and oblations*,' are added."

"That is a very great improvement," said Mr. Tresham; "it brings distinctly forward the doctrine of a Commemorative Sacrifice in the Holy Eucharist, which had hitherto been too much obscured. Well, after the fear with which I regarded this revision of the Prayer Book, I may well, my Agatha, take up, with aged Simeon, my *Nunc dimittis*."

Our tale is told; and if it warns any one against an admiration of the doctrinal views, a belief in the deep experimental knowledge, and a study of the writings, of those whose deeds were so fearfully wicked, it will not have been told in vain.

THE END.

GILBERT & RIVINGTON, Printers, St. John's Square.

AYTON PRIORY;

OR,

The Restored Monastery.

BY THE

REV. JOHN MASON NEALE, B.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;

AUTHOR OF "HERBERT TRESHAM," AND "AGNES DE TRACY."

"Thou gettest fables none ytold from mee:
For Paule, that writeth unto Timothee,
Reproveth them that weiven sothefastenesse,
And tellen fables, and swiche wretchednesse.
Why sholde I sowen draffe out of my fist,
When I may sowen wheat, if that I list?
For all, I say, if that you list to heare
Moralite, and vertuous matere,
And then that ye woll yeve me audience,
I wold full well, with CRISTE's reverence,
Doen your pleasure. . . . .
And therefore, if you list, I will not glose;
I woll you tell a little tale in prose."

CHAUCER. *The Parsone's Prologue.*

DEIGHTONS, CAMBRIDGE; RIVINGTONS, LONDON.

1843.

LONDON:
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

PREFACE.

THERE is, perhaps, hardly any subject which has recently occupied a larger share of the attention of Churchmen, than the possibility and expediency of a revival of the Monastick System. Hints have been dropped, and papers circulated, recommending a return to it: but the former have been, for the most part, vague, and the latter have entirely confined themselves to generalities. The following tale is intended, as well to set forth the advantages, and all but necessity, of the re-introduction of monasteries, as to suggest certain practical details connected with their establishment and subsequent working.

It is put forth on the part of the writer with feelings of the greatest diffidence; not because he entertains any doubt as to the truth or reality of the views he has advocated, but from a sense of his own inadequacy to support them as they ought to be supported, and from a fear that his having undertaken such an office may be regarded as presumptuous.

The recommendation of a re-adoption of the system must, of course, proceed from our spiritual fathers, before it is seriously taken up by the inferior clergy or laity. Nor must we shut our eyes to the fact, that however much monasteries were the boast of the unreformed, and might be so of the reformed, Anglican Church, any step taken towards restoring them would, by some, be regarded with suspicion, by others, viewed with the greatest aversion. So intimately are they, in the minds of most, connected with the corruptions of Romanism, that it will be a matter of great difficulty to make the contrary clear. Though we may again and again quote the universal testimony of the early Church in favour of the monastick life, though monasteries abound in those Churches which view Rome with as much dislike as does the most bigoted Protestant, though we may bring forward passages in which Divines of all classes, in our own Church, have spoken of their re-introduction as a desirable thing, from Bramhall and Thorndike down to Latimer and Burnet, the prejudice against them will be as obstinate, the outcry as clamourous, as ever.

A positive recommendation from the highest authority in the Church will doubtless, in time, overcome opposition; till then, it may, perhaps, be

allowable to endeavour to show its unreasonableness, and to point out some of the many advantages which a revival of the old system would bring with it. It seems also allowable to consider some of those matters of detail, such as the question of vows, and the connexion of religious houses with the parochial system, which must some day be settled, and on which there is a difference of opinion, even between those who agree on the main subject. The writer desires to assume no higher a tone in discussing these topicks than is consistent with that obedience which a priest owes to his superiors, and that deference which he is desirous of evincing towards his brethren; and the conversational form in which his pages are thrown, may sufficiently show that he has no desire either to dictate or to dogmatize.

While he can only wish that some more able hand had undertaken the task, he trusts that, if he shall not have succeeded in benefiting the cause it was his wish to support, he will, at least, escape being one of those injudicious advocates, who by their folly sometimes defeat or delay a scheme involving the interests which they thought to serve.

The points on which the following pages chiefly insist are these:

That the Dissolution of monasteries under Henry

VIII. was a horrible crime; as involving not only the deepest sacrilege, but also cruelty to the tenants and injustice to the founders: that sacrilege has always been regarded, even in its lower degrees, by the Church, as one of the blackest of sins: that the curse by which every religious foundation was guarded, has followed the spoilers and their descendants, in a most remarkable manner, to the present day: that the defences urged in exculpation of Henry's proceedings, from the superstition, and abuses of monasteries, are totally false in point of fact, and if they were true, irrelevant to the matter: that the Dissolution was forced on, not approved by, the Church: that the testimonies in favour of the general good discipline of the dissolved houses is the stronger, as coming from the parties most interested in their downfall: that monasteries have from the earliest times existed in every branch of the Church: that the blessing of the intercessory prayer constantly made in them is incalculable: that the Church system, involving nightly, as well as daily, supplication, can no where else be fully acted out: that a body of men, deeply read in ecclesiastical history and controversy, and surrounded by an atmosphere of Church feeling, would be fostered in them, which would be ready to oppose any new at-

tack of heresy or infidelity: that colleges cannot, in this respect, possess the same advantages: that self-discipline could in religious houses be practised more regularly, and closer communion with God be more attainable: that they would be invaluable as abodes for young men between their leaving the University and entering on the cure of souls, as supplying a course of training, intellectual, moral, and religious: that aged priests might be thus provided with an asylum, who now, though physically unequal to their duty, must either retain it, or be reduced to poverty: that important ecclesiastical works might here be undertaken with the advantage of uninterrupted opportunities and leisure, hallowed by religion, and a division of labour: that an asylum would be furnished for such as were without friends, or who, in the decline of life, wished to devote all their time and thoughts to the preparation for their approaching change: that those, who are immersed in business, or otherwise entangled in worldly pursuits, might here, in such seasons as Lent or Advent, find a place of salutary retirement: that the diminution of personal and other expences on the part of the inmates would set free a large portion of wealth for the service of God: that the poor might be tended in them, both spiritually and corporeally; education

carried on upon strictly sound principles; funds for church-building amassed; and church artists trained in devotional as well as professional habits.

The writer has only to add, that he could have wished to give a list of instances in which sacrilege has been signally punished in this world. But such a list, to be of any value, would have swelled this little volume far beyond his designs. Sir Henry Spelman's works will amply furnish such an one: and it is the writer's hope to publish at no distant period a collection of 'GOD's judgements on Church Violators,' as well from those, as from other, sources.

FUNCHAL, MADEIRA,
Ember-Saturday in Lent, 1843.

CORRIGENDA.

The absence of the writer from England must excuse several errata, of which the following are the most important:

Page	4,	line	4, *for* portraictures *read* pourtraictures
—	9,	—	6, *insert* and *after* vice
—	29,	—	15, *for* antlers *read* anthers
—	37,	—	5, *point thus;* some left for ears, some auditors, need.
—	83,	—	11, *for* band *read* kind
—	—	—	21, *for* sticketh *read* skilleth
—	89,	—	14, *for* setting *read* selling
—	122,	—	14, *after* attached *add* to you
—	125,	—	24, *dele* in
—	135,	—	4, *for* examiners *read* examinees
—	—	—	9, *for* leave *read* leaving
—	151,	—	8, *for* gay *read* grey
—	183,	—	3, *for* waiting *read* writing

AYTON PRIORY;

OR,

THE RESTORED MONASTERY.

CHAPTER I.

. . . pure and uncompounded beauties blesse
The mansion with an useful comelinesse,
Devoid of art: for here the architect,
Did not with curious skill a pile erect
Of carved marble, tuch, or porphyry,
But built a house for hospitality.
The lord and lady of the place delight
Rather to be, indeed, than seem in sight. CAREW.

THERE are few prettier villages among the lovely hamlets of England than that of Monk Teynton, as it meets the eye of the traveller, when he first gazes on its tall spire and quiet valley. You have the picturesque village street, with the red sandstone of the cottage walls, the well-thatched eaves, the thick chimneystacks, the trellised porches; you see, beautiful even in its ruins, the village cross: and the cot-

tagers' gardens, trimmed into quaintly shaped beds with borders of box, are gay with roses, or honeysuckles, or dahlias, according to the time of year, and betoken a kind landlord and industrious tenants. The grey old church, with its steep roof and intricate windows, and glass tinged with all the hues of the rainbow, is a rich prize to the sketch-book of the lovers of architectural beauty; and opposite to it, but half concealed by a shrubbery of birch, and laburnums, and lilac, is the modest parsonage, with its green gate and shady gravel walk. Beyond it, the lane winds on by the side of Teynton Park, a worthy example of what the seat of a country gentleman should be. Here are the sunk fence, the undulating expanse of turf, the giant oaks or chestnuts that stand here and there like solitary sentinels, the red fallow deer that glance in the sun, as they hurry from one glade to another, the old Elizabethan house, with its square-headed windows, stone mullions, and Corinthian doorway, the preserve of game, the silvery river that glides winding through the park. Well might the noble mansion and the broad demesne sometimes force from the passer-by the thought—Sir John Morley must be a happy man.

But that which, in the opinion of the good folks of Monk Teynton, was the glory of their village—and they were right—was Ayton Priory. It had been a Cistercian house, and occupied, as such always did, the loveliest spot for miles around. Situated where the river, by a sudden bend, left a "coin of van-

tage" for such a building, the modest refectory and lofty church tower were reflected in the quiet waters; and the cloister ran across them on a bridge of three fair arches. Many a religious man, sick of the vanity and tumults of the world, had here dedicated the evening of his days to God; many an one, happier than he, had here rested him all his life long; and many, whose labours of love had endeared them to the villagers around, but whose piety and humility were known only to their Maker, slept in the hallowed aisles, and left behind them only their names, and their humble prayer for mercy. The prior and monk were laid side by side; and some, who had borne arms for the cross, and signalized themselves by deeds of valour against the cruel Saracen, craved as a favour to "lay their bones beside the bones" of the ecclesiasticks. The last prior but one, filled as it were with a presentiment of coming evil, caused the words to be added to his brazen legend, "For y^e^ tender mercie of Jhesu let them rest in peace."

With a hundred other richer foundations, Ayton Priory was bestowed by Henry VIII. on Lord Cromwell; and the agent whom he employed in turning the estate into money, gloated over the treasure which the abbey church presented to his sacrilegious eyes. "I think," so he wrote to his infamous employer, "that your lordship did never see more curiously wrought work, both of tapestry and hangings, embroidery and vestments, pixes and thuribles, chalicys and lamps, than bee in this place. I have thought fit

to make a note of such, to the intent that your honour may know both its riches and my diligence. There were eight great tombes of alabaster, diversely carvyd with cherubim and saints, also with the portraietures of them that were buried in them, all wrought to the life. These, with notable payns, we brake down o' Monday last; and the alabaster I did give to Gregory Digges, the bricklayer, for his trouble, to make lime of. Also ten or twelve brasses, which we tost up, and which bee for the melting pot. Item, five chalicys, silver gilt, set with rubys stones; a reliquary, chacyd very curiously, and inlaid with certain gemmes. Item, two crosses of golde, and three of silver. Now we are a pullyng down the lead from the roof, of which I shall in due tyme advertise your honour. And so," continued the impious wretch, "I commende you to the keepynge of Almighty GOD."

Verily, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living GOD": and so both the spoilers of our abbey churches and their inferior agents found, when it was too late. In this world, they for the most part perished by miserable ends, leaving a name clogged with infamy, and a family oppressed by beggary; and in the world to come—but it is not for us to anticipate the judgments of Him to Whom vengeance belongeth.

For three hundred years, Ayton Priory passed in rapid succession from one family to another, and seemed, into the possession of whomsoever it might fall, to bring misfortune and ruin with it. It became

the property of a county family of wealth and influence—in twenty years not a member of it survived: a nobleman, charmed with the situation, brought to it his young bride—in a few months the mother and her infant were committed to the same grave: an admiral, high in the esteem of his country, purchased it—next year he perished with Sir Cloudesley Shovel: it passed to a merchant, one of the princely traders of our country, and shortly after he was ruined in the South Sea bubble. It had lately become the property of a Colonel Abberley. With his character, as well as with that of some other personages of our tale, we shall make the reader acquainted, by introducing him to the dinner table of Sir John Morley, and to a party assembled principally for the purpose of affording the Colonel an introduction to some of his future neighbours.

The ladies had withdrawn: the setting sun, just visible above the chestnut avenue which led to the house, shot a rich yellow glare on the dark oak floor and roof of the old dining-room, on the old family portraits with their heavy gilt frames, which ornamented the walls, on the quaintly carved sideboard, an heirloom from the days when mahogany was brought over as ships' ballast, and on the stone chimney-piece, wrought in all the curious elaboration of Elizabethan art into angels and monsters and flower-wreaths, and bearing conspicuously the Morley legend, "Time tryeth Trothe," and the Morley arms, which, for the sake of our heraldick readers, we will

emblazon as accurately as Sir John himself, a great amateur in heraldry, could wish. They were, sable a bend or, in chief a lion passant gardant of the second: the last being an honourable augmentation, won by a Morley, for some feat of prowess performed at Agincourt.

Besides Sir John Morley himself, who, with his tall muscular figure high forehead and bright eye, seemed yet in the full vigour of his strength, although more than a few grey hairs were to be seen on his head; and Col. Abberley, whose spare and well-built form, and dark complexion, showed clearly how many of his days had been spent in the field; there were Charles Abberley, the son of the latter; Mr. Wallis, the Vicar of Teynton, a clergyman who, had his youth been thrown in a time when the Church was putting forth her energies, might have proved a more efficient soldier in her ranks, but who was now almost past active service; Mr. Trenton, who, having amassed a considerable fortune at Birmingham, was now endeavouring to pass the remainder of his days in the pursuits and amusements of a country gentleman; Sir Thomas Underby, a baronet of very ancient family, and of the envied creation of 1611; and lastly George Morley, Sir John's second son, who, as curate to Mr. Wallis, took on himself all the responsibility of the parish management, and who was eventually, the living being in Sir John's gift, to succeed to its actual incumbency.

"And so, Sir John," observed Mr. Trenton, "you

expect your son from Cambridge next week, I am told. I am glad of it with all my heart; nothing like setting a man up for himself and giving him something to do. There are so many, now-a-days, that like to spend the best part of their lives in getting knowledge that can turn to no earthly use, that I am quite glad Mr. Morley is not to be one of them."

"Why," replied Sir John, "I believe my son's time has been as well spent at the university as it could be: he has laid in a good stock of sound learning, and better than that, the discipline of mind and formation of good moral habits he has gained there, will stand him in good stead all his life. But he and I agreed, that as he is to be a country gentleman, as his father before him, and as he does not, thank GOD, want a fellowship for his support, it was hardly worth while for him to sit for one. If he succeeded, as I am told he would, he must have deprived some one, perhaps equally worthy of the honour, and needing the emolument more; and if he failed, why, in his case there was so much time thrown away."

"He has remained there, however," asked Col. Abberley, "some time since his degree—has he not?"

"He has," returned Sir John: "it was his wish; and I had no objection. George, on the other hand, was anxious to enter on his work as soon as might be; and I was very glad that he should."

"And most assuredly," added Mr. Wallis, "I am

very glad that he has. The labour of the parish was getting quite beyond me; one sermon a week, I think, is as much as any man can undertake, and some of my parishioners were eager for two. Then the visiting I felt, in wet weather especially, very troublesome; and Mrs. Wallis was continually telling me that I was not sufficiently careful of myself. So, on the whole, I think myself very fortunate in so efficient and valuable a helper as my friend on the other side of the table."

The truth was, that Mr. Wallis's inactivity, partly the natural infirmity of increasing years, partly the besetting sin against which he had never sufficiently struggled, had been a source of great triumph to the Dissenters. The Wesleyans, ever ready to profit by the weakness of the Church, had been enabled to enlarge and beautify their conventicle; a small Independent meeting-house had sprung up, and proselytes were added to each of the sectarian bodies. Nor could this be matter of wonder. Mr. Tomkins, of the *New Connexion*, and Mr. Jupp, of *Cave Adullam Chapel*, both in their visits to the members of their respective congregations, and in their sermons, gave ample proof that they were, at all events, in earnest; Mr. Wallis, on the contrary, never visited a parishioner except in case of extreme danger, and then only when he was sent for; and as to his morning discourse on the Sunday, it was much of such a description as might have been delivered by an enlightened follower of Plato. If he did not, with

Paley, actually say that such expressions as a new creature, a new life, a new man, meant "nothing at all—nothing, that is, to us, and in our circumstances;" nor, with another divine, that Socrates was "made wisdom and righteousness" to mankind; he contented himself with exhortations to avoid vice—to follow virtue, since even heathens had agreed that the former was misery, the latter, happiness: he exhorted his hearers to do their best, and to trust to a merciful GOD, and not to doubt but that if, on the whole, their virtues preponderated over their vices, He would accept the one and overlook the other.

This kind of preaching, though not calculated to do much harm among a poor and illiterate congregation, who could not understand above one sentence in five, was as little likely to retain those in the fold of the Church, who were daily exposed to the temptations arising from the more attractive forms in which schism displayed itself. When Mr. Tomkins, following the cowardly and most deceitful craft which will eventually render Wesleyanism a bye-word even among other schismaticks, declared that Wesleyan Methodism was not dissent from the Church, nor schism in it, but the offspring of an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit of GOD; when Mr. Jupp dwelt on the liberty of extemporary prayer, and the privilege of a free ministry, not set aside by man, but acknowledging an immediate call from GOD; how were the villagers of Monk Teynton to meet these arguments? The trumpet gave an uncertain sound;

and who could prepare himself for battle? All that were really earnest-minded among them, with one or two exceptions, fell off into the ranks of schism; the careless and worthless, who were content with any form of religion, retained that in which they had been educated, since a change would have involved some trouble. Of course, the character of the respective parties was an additional cause of glorying to those who were in arms against their Church.

Mr. Wallis, finding that the defections increased weekly, after having in vain had recourse to the expedient of making his extracts from Tillotson, and Clarke, and John Taylor, larger than usual, determined on preaching a sermon in defence of the Church. This production he elaborated with extreme care, and hoped that a considerable effect would arise from it. He began by stating that the origin of every government was from the necessity felt for every individual giving up some of his own liberty, political, moral, and religious, for the safety and good order of the whole; that the government thus formed was henceforth the representative of the state at large; that it was charged with its welfare, and must answer for its happiness. Consequently, that this government, after a fair and candid view of all religions, would choose that which it thought most likely to be conducive to the publick weal; that, for example, after inquiring into the principles and pretensions of Paganism, Mahometanism, and Christianity, it would probably feel inclined to embrace

the latter; that among the various persuasions included in this common name, it had made choice of Protestant Episcopacy; that to Protestant Episcopacy, therefore, it was the duty of every good citizen to conform; that there were, indeed, those who from conscientious scruples were unable to do so, and that such were no doubt perfectly justified in serving God as they thought best, since, doubtless, all worship, if it come from the heart, is equally acceptable to the Supreme Being; but that where conscience interposed no obstacle, for the sake of peace, good order, and good citizenship, individuals should conform to the established religion.

This discourse, though it seemed to produce no further effect in the parish, than the delivery of sermons at both the meetings against the discipline of the Church on several succeeding Sundays, was yet considered by its author as so convincing, that he could not resist the temptation of committing it to the press. It was his first and last publication: and he was not a little surprised on receiving, some short time subsequently, his publisher's account, with a *per contra* of only six sold copies; copies which Sir John Morley had considered it but a mark of proper respect to purchase.

It was at this season that George Morley entered on his parish work, as Mr. Wallis's curate. He was eager at once to commence the daily service; but the rector, instinctively opposed to all change, and perhaps actuated by a little natural jealousy of his

future successor, would not hear for a moment of such a proposal. Nor was it without considerable reluctance that he allowed the church to be opened for service on saints' days, and that he gave his consent, if this (to use his own expression) should be "found to answer," to the commemorations of Wednesday and Friday in a similar manner. Indeed, to say the truth, Mr. Wallis felt considerable apprehension as to the tendency of certain of his curate's doctrines. Having passed all his days in the seclusion of a very retired living, and having confined his theological reading within very narrow limits, he was by no means prepared for the bold and uncompromising claims which George Morley put forth in behalf of the Church. Not that he found anything in them to which he could object; on the contrary, as he had latterly begun to doubt whether Dissenters could successfully be met with any weapon in his own armoury, he was glad to be furnished with some which promised to stand in better stead. Still, when he heard of the graces which it had pleased God to bestow upon man being laid up for him in the Church alone; when he found the Power of the Keys vindicated to Her Ministers, to the exclusion of all others, he began to reflect, that either the ground he had formerly taken was miserably low, or that now occupied by his curate most dangerous and false. Yet he had the satisfaction of finding, that though met with the greatest opposition, his curate not only succeeded in maintaining his own position, but gradually appeared

to win back some of the more reasonable separatists to the Church, at the same time that he raised the tone and standard of churchmanship to a far higher stage than they had previously occupied. But to return.

"I had a singular visit to-day," said Sir John, "from a man, Mr. Wallis, whom you must know only too well; I mean Jupp, the Independent preacher. He came to ask me to allow a Teetotal Festival to be held next week in that field of mine by Collard's end: there is to be a procession, he tells me, and musick, and banners, and I know not what else. The association, it seems, has met with no great success here, and they wish to create a sensation."

"I presume," observed Mr. Trenton, "that you made no difficulty in allowing the meeting to take place on your ground."

"Indeed, it would not be in accordance with my principles to allow it," answered the other: "and so, much to the man's disappointment and chagrin, I was obliged to tell him."

"Well now!" remarked Mr. Trenton, "I must say that I cannot comprehend your objections to the scheme. It seems to me a most excellent method of winning the lower classes to habits of sobriety; and it certainly has been attended with the happiest effects."

"My father probably thought," said George Mor-

ley, "that to make a scheme desirable, the means as well as the end must be right."

"The means are right enough in this case," replied the merchant; "people who have been in the habit of indulging to excess in liquor, find that by entering into an engagement with each other, they are able to resist the temptation better than they could do separately: no harm in that, is there? And as to the processions and musick, why, if the poor wretches take a pleasure in the thing, why not let them have it, and welcome?"

"Oh! I have no objection to the procession, and the musick, in the world. But what I think extremely objectionable, is the banding together of men to bind themselves by an unauthorized vow to *that*, which by the strongest of all vows they are already bound to. It is paying a deference to human contracts, which they will not pay to the express commands of God."

"You speak," said Col. Abberley, "as if the only vow which is taken by these people were the abstaining from intoxication. But it is not so, of course: to cut off all temptations to it, they bind themselves by a vow which they have not already taken, and which, as entailing a degree of sacrifice which proves their earnestness, I look on as very laudable."

"I cannot think that Churchmen have a right," replied the Curate, "to take upon themselves a vow

not authorized by the Church. Depend upon it, if they would wish for a fair field in which to exercise their temperance and sobriety, She has provided them a more spacious one than any which they can find for themselves. When we see them acting up to Her injunctions with respect to weekly and occasional fasts, then it will be time to inquire whether any further modes of self-denial are requisite or desirable."

"I quite agree with what you say respecting the unauthorizedness of new schemes of self-discipline," remarked Sir Thomas Underby: "but you cannot expect me to agree with you as to the unlawfulness of private vows, otherwise I should be denying the advantages of the monastick system."

"I only said," returned George Morley, "that vows appeared to me unlawful, when unauthorized by the Church, and taken by a party as the badge, or as in this case as the vital principle of that party. I do not see why private vows should be unlawful: nor do I conceive, though I desire to speak in submission to the better judgment of others, that the monastick vow is unlawful, even if taken for the whole period of one's life, when authorized duly by the Church. Where it is not, as in our own branch of it, I do not see how it could be properly taken; but where, as in foreign countries, the Church has thought fit to allow it, I for one should take it without scruple."

"But," said Mr. Wallis, "a great argument with

me against the system is, that instead of enjoying the good things Providence has set before them, it leads men to throw them aside, as if they were better and holier for abstaining than for enjoying. Now such an idea seems to me quite at variance with the mild and beneficent spirit of our religion: and I ground my opposition to it on this consideration."

"We must however," observed Sir John, "take care that we do not press that argument further than it will go; else we shall be met by the assertion of the duty of self-denial and self-controlment, even in lawful enjoyments, which assuredly is too much neglected in the present day. I think that the principle of singling out one vice, and binding men together in a league against that, has certainly a tendency to encourage men to make slight of others. We should see the folly of the thing, if we applied it to any other kind of crime. Suppose, for example, that a set of men, deeply impressed with the sense of the sin of stealing, should enter into an association to avoid it, and not only so, but to avoid all possible approach, or appearance of approach to it, should take a vow, not merely against abstracting, but against borrowing any thing from their neighbours."

"Laugh as you will," cried Mr. Trenton, "you cannot deny that infinite good has resulted from the temperance vow. Look at Ireland, for example; do you happen to know how much, since the success of Father Matthew, the duty on spirits has diminished there?"

"And do *you* happen to know," asked Sir John Morley, "how much that on opium has increased? Nearly, I take it, in the same proportion."

"We read," added his son, "of vast numbers that have taken the vow; I wish we were informed how many have broken it. We see in the reports of the different associations, assertions that very few have done so. Whether the gentlemen who write those reports are quite so particular in their use of the words *very few*, as less interested parties might be, I will not pretend to determine."

"Do you mean then to say," asked Mr. Trenton, "that no good has ever resulted from these societies?"

"By no means," returned George Morley. "But to show that good may have occasionally, or even frequently resulted from them, is only to say what may be said of many of the most dangerous and wicked systems ever devised. The fact is, that where teetotalism has had fair play, it has degenerated into downright heresy. In Cornwall, for example, teetotalers have meetings to themselves, not thinking it right to worship with those who disagree with them. Indeed, they would almost appear to exclude from salvation those who keep on in the old fashioned way; and against none is their language more bitter than it is against the poor temperance societies: the members of which will not carry the pledge to so great a length as their more violent brethren. And

it is a horrible fact, that in their profane imitations of the LORD's Supper, wine is not employed."

"With respect to Father Matthew," said Sir John, "I believe him to be a well meaning man, but his line of conduct is about as void of every due feeling for episcopal pre-eminence (allowing, for the sake of argument, his Church to be the true Church), as ever was displayed by Presbyterian or Independent. A simple Priest, he exercises a kind of hyper-episcopal function in every diocese where it may suit his fancy or convenience to go: he invents a kind of ceremony for the occasion, and seems to think that the efficacy of the pledge depends, not in the intrinsic virtue of an oath, but on the hands by which it is administered. To my mind, there is much in this that looks like vanity, hiding itself (perhaps unconsciously) under the cloke of doing GOD service."

"We are to remember, too," added his son, "that after all, this is but a new heresy revived; so true is it, that there is nothing new under the sun."

"To what heresy, Mr. Morley, do you allude?" asked Sir Thomas Underby.

"That of the Hydroparastatæ, if you recall the name," answered the other.

"I had forgotten their existence," replied Sir Thomas. "Certainly, it is singular enough that a new antidote to vice should turn out to be an old heresy."

"One might perhaps find it to be the case in more instances than this," said Sir John Morley. "We may take it for granted that there is no royal road to virtue, any more than there is to science. Shall we go up into the drawing-room?"

CHAPTER II.

Lament, lament, old abbeys,
The fairies' lost command:
They did but change poor babies,
But some have changed your land;
And all your children sprung from thence
Are now grown Puritanes;
Who live unchangèd ever since
For love of your domains.

BISHOP CORBET.

"Now that you are going to settle down with us, Robert," said Sir John Morley to his eldest son, a few days after the return of the latter to Teynton Park, and as they were on their way to Ayton Priory, "I hope we may be able to make one or two alterations for the better in the village. My time is so much taken up by my duties as a magistrate and by county business, and your brother is so much afraid, and it shows well in him to be so, of doing any thing which may seem to anticipate our worthy Vicar's removal, that in many respects you will be able to effect more than either of us. I wish we could put a little more energy into good

Mr. Wallis; as it is, I fear we must be content with getting his approval to our plans."

"I can assure you," replied Robert Morley, "I mean to sit down to the acquirement of a knowledge of my new profession, with as hearty good will as ever I did to Mathematicks when I was a freshman. But what is there which you think my help could be serviceable in, just at present?"

"I will tell you one thing," replied his father, "which has long weighed upon my mind. I have hitherto refrained from mentioning it to you, because it is a subject of importance, and I wished you to be in a condition to form an unbiassed judgement on it. I do not want you to give me a hasty answer; take your own time, if you feel any difficulty in making up your mind. You know well that the great tithes of Monk Teynton have been in our family for nearly sixty years. They were originally appropriate to Ayton Priory, and were not separated from that estate till your great-grandfather bought them from the Jolliffes, then its owners. Till lately, I had never bestowed much attention on the subject; or, if I ever felt a momentary scruple at enjoying a revenue which had once been solemnly appropriated to the service of God, I quieted my conscience by the thought that so long possession conferred a right, and that probably most estates were acquired, at some period or other, in a manner not perfectly just. Still, I must confess that I was not satisfied to see Mr. Wallis undertaking the duties

of a large parish for £400 a year, while I, from an estate originally intended for his maintenance in the cure, derive an equal income, and do nothing for it. Shortly after I came into possession of the estate, I offered, if he wished for the aid of a curate, to find the funds: this he declined, on the ground of being able to take the whole duty himself; but partly influenced, I imagine, by the desire of having things entirely his own way, and avoiding all interference."

"He made no difficulty, I think, when you proposed that George should become his curate, did he?" asked Robert Morley.

"On the contrary, he seemed very well pleased with the offer: but then the management of the parish was obviously getting beyond his strength. Had he had any family, it was always my intention to help them forward in the world in any way that he might wish; but as this was not the case, and as his expenses in the way of parochial charity were next to nothing, since he always had *carte blanche* from me, in relieving such cases as he might consider deserving, I did not feel called upon to offer any addition to his income. The rather as he has a tolerable private fortune."

"It seems to me," said the other, "that Mr. Wallis, however willing he might be to increase his income, is better off than the larger part of our parish clergy, and certainly no one can blame you for having acted in any way ungenerously towards him."

"But lately," continued Sir John, not heeding the interruption, "my thoughts on the subject have undergone a considerable change. At the time that the Church Revenues Bill was brought before parliament, I had occasion to go somewhat deeply into the subject. The result of my inquiries was, as you know, a conviction that, recommended by men whose motives I am bound to believe the best, and whose station and private character no one can reverence and esteem more than myself, that Bill fearfully approached to sacrilege. To divert money from the purposes to which pious founders and benefactors, now with GOD, had appropriated it, even though it were for the promotion of religion in another way, I could not but think most unjust to those who cannot now raise their voices in behalf of their own rights, most cruel to those who very willingly spent and were spent for us, and most dangerous by way of example to future depredators, and as checking many a benevolent impulse, lest the money designed for a particular charity might hereafter be diverted into a channel which the bequeather of that money would not approve. You know very well that these were my sentiments on this subject; and, as I remember, you quite agreed with me in them."

"I did indeed," replied his son. "I see to what you are coming; but I will not interrupt you."

"Well," resumed Sir John Morley, "if this were my opinion of the diversion of funds from one religious purpose to another, what, it struck me, must

be the guilt of those, who appropriate the wealth intended for the service of the Church to their own private use? And what, it naturally followed, have I been doing as a lay rector for so many years? Have I not been, in ignorance it is true, robbing God, and will not all that sum be required at my hands? The more I thought, and the more I read, the more sensible did I become of the danger of such an impropriation; and I can assure you that I quite trembled as I turned page after page of Sir Henry Spelman's 'History of Sacrilege,' and his 'De non Temerandis Ecclesiis.' It is my earnest wish to repair, as far as I am able, the wrong I have done: and so far as concerns the past, I am determined that I will. You know that I cannot alienate the great tithes from my estate without your consent: and it is on this subject that I determined to speak to you as soon as an opportunity should offer."

"You may be quite sure, my dear father," answered his son, "that any appropriation of money which you may feel it right to make, I shall be most willing to join in, even although I were not convinced of its necessity. The consideration, however, is not new to me. I can assure you that I have no hesitation whatever in taking any step which may be necessary to carry your plan into effect. But what were the means by which you intended to make good the sums you have already received from this appropriation?"

"I will tell you," answered Sir John, "after I

have first said how much I am gratified that you are willing to act with me, not only from a regard to my feelings, but also from a sense of the danger of having any thing to do with Church property. The income arising from the impropriate tithes is £400. I have been in possession of the estate nine and twenty years. I have therefore a sum of £11,600 to pay at once. The interest of this, at 4 per cent. amounts to £4,560. Therefore, I ought to reimburse the sum of £16,160 to the Church. The question is, how to employ the money. Now, doubtless, if sacrilege had never been committed, Mr. Wallis would have been in possession of this sum. Yet, I cannot think that I should be justified in putting it into his hands. It is an unfair way, generally speaking, to allow expediency to have any influence in a matter of pure justice, so that I will not argue as to the superior advantage of devoting that sum immediately to the Church: because, if it actually belongs to Mr. Wallis, however good the purpose to which I might destine it, I should only be committing a robbery on him. But, on due consideration of the matter, I am inclined to think, that in viewing him in the light of a steward of the Church's property—as every priest ought to be viewed, though I shall now lose no time in making over to him the future income derivable from the impropriation, I shall be acting more in accordance with Church principles, by devoting the accumulated sum of past years to the immediate furtherance of the interests of the Church,

taking care at the same time, to let it be known that I do not consider myself to be doing an act of charity, but a simple act of justice."

"And what do you then intend to employ the sum upon?" enquired Robert.

"This parish has of course the first claim upon us. Now at Ayton, we have a population of nearly seven hundred, at the distance of a full mile from the parish church; and who would be unable, if that church were filled as it ought to be, to obtain accommodation there. I propose, therefore, to build and endow a church for them. I shall endow it at first with £200 a year, hoping, if my life be spared, to be able, ere long, to add another hundred: and the £10,000 which will remain will not be at all too much for a church—though not of the largest size—as it ought to be built."

"I am quite delighted with the plan," cried Robert; "but I want to ask one question: have you mentioned any thing of it to George?"

"No," returned Sir John: "you were the first person to be consulted in the matter, and it was due to you that I should not previously mention it."

"I sadly fear, then," replied the other, "that George will never be vicar,—rector, I should say—of Teynton. I know him well enough to be sure that he would look on the giving up the impropriation as too much resembling a provision for him, if he ever derived any advantage from it. At least he would think that others might regard it in this light."

"I hope that he would not take this view of it: I am sure the world would not; though we may very safely leave it to form its own decision on the matter, without troubling ourselves to enquire what that decision is. But in the first place, Mr. Wallis may live twenty years yet: and in the event, George can only have a life interest in the restored impropriation: so that were my object only to provide for him, I should have gone to work in rather an expensive way."

"I shall be very glad if you can make him see it so; but I am sure he will have some scruples at first."

They were now entering Ayton Park: and the conversation turned on the family who possessed it. "I am sure," said Robert, "if the father be at all like the son, you must find him a great acquisition to the Teynton society."

"It is an odd coincidence, certainly, that you should have been acquainted at college. Yes; Col. Abberley seems a very pleasant gentlemanly man, without any particularly definite view, except on politicks, and there, fortunately, the right way. Young Abberley, of whom, however, I have seen but very little, I much like; indeed, I could hardly help doing so, on account of his very warm friendship to you."

"I do not believe there is a more excellent fellow in the county, be the other who he may; and I am glad, for all our sakes, that they are settled at Ayton."

By this time they were arrived in sight of the house: and well as they were acquainted with it, the father and son almost involuntarily drew their reins, to admire the beauty of the situation. It was a lovely morning in June: the remains of the old abbey to the left, the manor-house to the right, and the river seen between the two was bright in the rays of an unclouded sun. There was the gate-house, built by Prior Kirton, in the time of Henry VII., with its broad Tudor arch, octagonal flanking turrets, and mouldings of vine leaf and roses: the prior's rebus, a dog sitting on a barrel (Cur-ton), was wrought in the spandrels. A honeysuckle climbed up one of the angular turrets, and flung its long sweet arms over the grey stone. Beyond it you might see the smooth turf, once the great court-yard; the ruins of the refectory on one side, and the remains of the church on the other: there were the four massy belfry arches, springing out from a thicket of glossy holly bushes, though their ponderous superstructure had long since fallen in: there were the banded shafts of the nave pillars, with their delicate mouldings, and deeply hollowed bases: the choir arch yet remained perfect, and festoons of the pale flowers of deadly nightshade hung down from it: where the high altar had once stood, to which the soft turf still rose in undulating steps, was a black beech, with its smooth white trunk, and dark purple leaves: and through the intricate windows of the Lady chapel the flush of a pink Maybush might be

seen, as if in mimicry of the glitter of jewels which had once decked the same spot. There was also the old wall, now ruinous and blocked up with fallen rubbish: there was a room, called by tradition the abbat's parlour, there was the abbey barn, a noble cross structure: and the arches of the cloister bridge (mentioned before) that spanned the stream, and in the cool dark shade it threw across the waters, afforded a favorite retreat to trout, and small fish. The ground, as it sloped down to the river, was as soft and smooth as velvet: the water itself was fringed with a thick skirting of bulrushes, sedge, and irises: while on its surface floated many waterlilies, some white, with their silver petals and yellow antlers; some yellow, like little knops of gold. The house, a structure of the time of King James the 1st, was of the old red Ely brick, which, when exposed to the sun and storms of two hundred years, assumes so venerable an appearance; but in the well-carved fragments built here and there into the walls, it bore sad witness that the materials of the House of God had been appropriated to the abode of man. Fenced off by a sunk ditch and ha-ha from the rest of the park, it was sheltered behind by a thick wood of chestnuts; while the lawn in front was somewhat formally laid out in beds of various quaint shapes; circular, semi-circular, starlike, crescent-shaped, or diamond festooned. The sweet warm scent of an English June, the hum of bees, the song of larks,

and the whispering of the wind in the branches, made Ayton Priory seem to its visitors a perfect paradise.

Having ascertained from the servant that his master and mistress were at home, and ushered through the venerable old hall, and up the short oaken staircase, the banisters whereof were curiously carved throughout, and terminated in two lions, Sir John Morley and his son were warmly welcomed by Charles Abberley, who had not yet met his old friend.

"I was on the point," he said, "of riding over to Teynton to call on you: I have longed to do so, these three days, but I thought you would have quite enough to do without receiving visitors."

"I would have found time enough for you, Abberley, at all events," said his friend; "though certainly my days have been pretty well taken up in getting settled. But I think I have tolerably well succeeded at last."

"I am very glad to hear, Mr. Morley," said Col. Abberley, "that we are to have the pleasure of having you amongst us. My son takes the credit of not having intruded on you before to himself, but I can assure you that I had quite a difficulty in keeping him back."

"I don't know whether the young men of the present day read more than they used to do, Colonel," said Sir John, "but I am sure they buy more books than we could have afforded in our time. I sug-

gested to Robert the propriety of adding a wing to my house for his library; how he has contrived to dispose of it, I can hardly think."

While Robert Morley and his friend were discussing the characters and histories of college acquaintance, and Sir John was consulted by Col. Abberley and his lady on various points of local arrangement, Mrs. Laxington, a widow lady who resided at Teynton, and having a moderate income and nothing to do, was as well acquainted with most of her neighbours' concerns as they were themselves, was announced.

"How do you do, Mrs. Abberley? How are you, Colonel? Ah, Sir John, glad to see you here! Really, Mr. Morley, it is quite a treat to have you amongst us again. Hot weather this—is it not? good for the hay they tell me—but the walk here almost too warm. But I could not help coming, Mrs. Abberley, to thank you for our treat yesterday—don't know when I have enjoyed a day more; weather so clear and fine, and the place so pretty, and the party so pleasant; dear me! it was really enchanting."

"I am glad you enjoyed yourself," said Mrs. Abberley; "I left orders with the servants to give any assistance you might want."

"Thank you a thousand times—so they told me; but Mr. Tomkins is so clever at that sort of thing, that really we wanted nothing at all. A little picnic at the Abbey," she added, explanatorily to Sir John Morley, who looked as if he did not compre-

hend; "Mrs. Abberley was kind enough to give me leave to bring a small party; we came yesterday, and had dinner and tea: there was Mrs. Dixon, and her sons and four daughters, Dixon could not come: very clever doctor he is, Col. Abberley, has immense practice; he would have liked it of all things—but he had to ride over to Mr. Jones, at Studham—he is in a bad way, I am afraid. They say he had three doctors with him last Friday—enough to kill any man, I think, and so I told Mrs. Dixon—but that was my little joke, you know, Colonel; well, that was six; young Tomkins, seven; Mr. and Mrs. Turner and Miss Turner, ten; John Williams and his sister, twelve; myself, thirteen—who else was there? I know there were fourteen, because we had put down thirteen at first, and then young Tomkins laughed, and said it would not be lucky—so clever of him, now, wasn't it? and then, you know, Mrs. Abberley, though I am quite above such old superstitions, one never knows what may revive them—and one *has* heard strange things come of them; however, as I said to William Tomkins when we went out, don't you think, I said, that I mind any of that nonsense—but the more the merrier—and the dinner that will do for thirteen will do for fourteen. 'Oh no!' he said, 'I never thought you would care for such foolery—fit enough for the old superstitious fellows who built this place, but not for us now-a-days.' But, as I was saying,—who was the fourteenth? Oh! I know, old Mrs. Wyndham—

a good old body she is—and as it is not often she goes out holiday-making, I thought it would be a charity to ask her, and so I did."

"I hope you found no inconvenience from your expedition," said Col. Abberley, by way of saying something.

"Oh dear, no: we came early—some walked, and some came on donkeys; then the young folks had a good game at blindman's buff in and out of the church and the square—I am sure I leant against one of the old pillars and laughed till I was fit to die: and William Tomkins, so clever he is at making fun of everything, took off the odd ways of most of them as they played; and then we sat down to dinner under the old beech, and a very good dinner it was; it came in a donkey-cart—I had it cooked myself—and my servant Betty had all the trouble of getting it; (I always deal with Clarke, Mrs. Abberley, his mutton is a halfpenny a pound less than Jupp, and, I think, just as good,) then after dinner we had singing, and the gentlemen made speeches, and then they got up a little dance, while I made the kettle boil—and we all sat comfortably down to tea, and so came home about eight o'clock."

"I think we passed you," said Mrs. Abberley, "as we were returning from Studham, where we spent yesterday."

"Very likely, I think. Oh yes! I remember passing a carriage, and I said to young Tomkins, —whose can that be? It can't be the Abberleys, I

said, because they would hardly come back so early, but so it was you, after all? Well, you know, they say the abbey is haunted, and so, going back, Tomkins told us all manner of horrid ghost stories, till some of the girls were so frightened, that they hardly knew whether they were standing on their heads or on their feet. Now, I said, William—(I always call him William, Colonel, for I've known him ever since he was in arms)—I've promised to bring back these young ladies safe, and I won't have them frightened, I said, out of their senses. 'I frighten a lady?' says he—you know he is always very full of his compliments, 'I'd rather lose my own senses,' he says, 'than do that.' I suppose, Mr. Morley, you don't know young Tomkins?" inquired the lady abruptly.

"I think," said Robert, "I saw him once last winter, walking about in one of those rough coats which seem designed to bring a man as nearly as possible to the state of a bear; but further than this, I have not the honour of his acquaintance."

"Well, but Col. Abberley," said Mrs. Laxington, "I really quite want to hear what you think of us as a neighbourhood. Fine preacher, Mr. Wallis, isn't he? and I am sure, Mr. Morley, your brother made me cry so last sermon, that I hardly knew how to sit it out. Then, Mr. Jupp is a most excellent man, though I can't say I quite entirely agree with him, for you know, Sir John, I call myself a very good Churchwoman; but then, as I say, let's agree to differ on such little points; and old Mr. Tomkins,

too—there isn't a village in England better off than we are for preaching. And a sweet pretty place, isn't it? I am sure, as I was saying the other day to Betsy Smith, (and that reminds me, Sir John, to speak to you about poor John Smith, he has just lost one of his cows, and I was thinking of getting up a subscription for him, poor fellow, for he is a deserving man, I am sure), and, as I was saying to his wife, Well, Betsy, I said, if you are not thankful for being in such a village as this, I don't know, I said, who ought to be."

Sir John Morley, who was well aware that Mrs. Laxington's reminiscences of Monk Teynton were apt to be spun out to considerable length, now rose to take leave. Charles Abberley followed him, and said, as they walked across the garden,

"I am quite sure, Sir John, from what I have heard you say myself, and from what I know of you from your son, that you feel these constantly repeated desecrations of the abbey as painfully as I do. My father, I know, does not approve of them; and I earnestly begged of him not to allow Mrs. Laxington's pic-nic to be held in the ruins. He was half disposed to listen to what I said; but he has a great dread of unpopularity, and as a similar permission was never refused by our predecessors, and as our good neighbours seem almost to claim the favour as a right, he was unwilling to displease them by interfering to put a stop to their enjoyments. Perhaps, if ever the opportunity should offer, you would not

mind speaking to him on the subject, I am sure a word from you will have great weight with him."

"You are quite right in thinking that I mourn with you the desecrations to which the priory is exposed," replied Sir John. "If I should ever be able to put my view of the case before Col. Abberley, I certainly will."

"Thank you," returned the other; "I was sure you would not think my request an intrusion."

"I quite pity that young man," said Sir John Morley to his son, as they rode back. "Were he but in a better situation for moral improvement, I have seldom seen one who I think would develope into a more valuable character. We must do what we can for him, Robert."

CHAPTER III.

Is this of Joel a proclamation for liberty of preaching, that all, young and old, menservants and maidservants, may fall to it? To this sense hath this Scripture been wrested by the enthusiasts of former ages, and still is: all flesh may not be cut into tongues: some left for ears some auditors need. Else a Cyclopean Church will grow upon us, where all were speakers, no body heard another. *Prophetabunt* must not make us forget *invocat.*—Bishop Andrewes, III. s. 11. 4.

In the history of the county in which the scene of our story is laid, and under the head of Monk Teynton, we read: "The Independent chapel, erected in 18—, is a neat building of the Ionic order; the present minister is the Rev. John Jupp." The history of this place was a curious specimen of the way in which dissent is generally introduced into a village. There was a certain farmer Harris, a man well to do in the world, and a professed Churchman, who had on some occasion incurred a rebuke from Mr. Wallis, a most unusual exhibition of authority on his part, for some open and scandalous crime. While determining to be revenged on his vicar, he felt that

to join the Wesleyans, whom he had all his life been in the habit of opposing, by way of keeping up his only claim to be considered a member of the Church, would be impossible. He therefore for some time not only abstained from going to Church—he had hardly ever gone there before—but strictly forbade all members of his family to attend publick worship either there or at the "New Connexion." At last a method occurred to him, by which he could at once manifest his defection from the Church, provide for a member of his own family, and, if the speculation answered, secure himself from incurring any expense in the promotion of these objects. It happened that a relation of his wife's, who had hitherto been a kind of hanger-on in the family, had acquired considerable reputation in the little market-town of Studham as a lecturer. His first attempt in the profession had been a series of six lectures, on the Doctrine, Discipline, and Emoluments of the Establishment: in which he proved, to those who would believe him, that the Church cost the nation twenty millions a year; that to exact from the enlightened spirit of the present age a subscription to doctrinal articles, was repugnant to every principle of reason and philosophy; that tithes and church rates were in the highest degree tyrannous and antichristian; that the voluntary system was the only one which could possibly promote vital Christianity; with various other assertions of the same kind, made somewhat unscrupulously by gentlemen who depend for their subsistence

on their power of popularity. He next acquitted himself with such credit in a series of anti-corn-law lectures that the ——shire Reformer of the following Saturday had this paragraph:—

"On Tuesday evening Mr. Jupp delivered his last lecture on the subject of the corn trade, to a crowded auditory in the town hall of Studham. We regret that we have not space to follow the talented lecturer through the elaborate arguments by which he exposed the iniquity of the present system; but there is the less occasion for us to do so, as we understand that Mr. Jupp has been prevailed on, by the importunity of his friends, to give his lectures to the publick."

The latter hint, designed by the writer, who was no other than Mr. Jupp himself, as a *feeler*, having proved unsuccessful, and no other subject on which he could exert his lecturing powers at present occurring to him, he betook himself to Farmer Harris's, and had spent a fortnight there much more to his own satisfaction than that of his host. It was at this time that the thought of establishing his nephew as a preacher in the Independent connexion occurred to the farmer; and finding, on inquiry, that the young man had no objection to the plan, he proceeded to take steps for carrying it into execution. Mr. Gulliver, the Independent minister, or rather, to adopt the distinction drawn by a gentleman of a Bible Society meeting, on being spoken of as an Independ-

ent minister—"I beg your pardon, Sir,—the minister of an Independent congregation,"—was taken into council on the occasion, and suggested in the first instance an application to the "Voluntary Evangelical Association," setting forth the want of true Gospel preaching at Monk Teynton, and that a benevolent individual residing there was disposed to make considerable sacrifices, if help were obtained from other quarters. As Mr. Gulliver had considerable influence in that Society, the sum of £70 was voted for the erection of a chapel: an advertisement "To the Truly Benevolent," in the *Record*, produced £10 more; and the sum was made up to £100 by friends "of the cause," in and about Studham. Stubbing, the principal mason in that town, was then applied to, to give an estimate of the probable expense of a building calculated for the accommodation of 150 on the ground-floor, and to which galleries might be subsequently added, if necessary. Two hundred pounds was the lowest estimate, and Farmer Harris was considerably terrified by the prospect of having to disburse the half of that sum from his own pocket. But he was encouraged by his Studham friend, who observed, that a sermon preached by some popular London minister, would draw a large collection; and that the return on the principal laid out, would be sure and steady. He further offered to instruct Mr. Jupp in a few of the principal arguments by which his new position would

be successfully defended ; and the latter, accordingly, was a constant sitter under Mr. Gulliver in Ebenezer chapel, and as constantly (that is, except at meal-time), an inmate in Mr. Gulliver's house. In the meantime, Farmer Harris having contributed a piece of waste land that belonged to him, and for which he could never find any use, the building advanced rapidly. To be sure three of its sides were plain enough, sand-coloured brick, with round-headed staring windows ; but the fourth, which fronted the road, was adorned with four Ionic pilasters in stucco, copied from those in the market-house of Studham ; and a door, neatly stained to imitate oak, was inserted between the interior ones. In two months the scaffolding was struck, and in three the building was ready to be opened.

Farmer Harris, on receiving Stubbing's account, amounting to £257. 16*s*. 7½*d*., gave vent to certain expressions, which came somewhat oddly from the mouth of the founder of a chapel : and he was hardly pacified with the news that Mr. Gulliver had persuaded a dissenting teacher of considerable eminence in London (and one, whose tomb, if he followed Sir Henry Wotton's example, would be inscribed with the words, "Here lies the author of that sentence, 'The Church of England has destroyed more souls than she has saved'"), to preach the opening sermon. As the appointed Sunday drew near, the fame of the opening, and the rumours afloat on the subject,

were musick to Mr. Harris's ears. "Will you come and see *my* chapel opened next Sunday?" was the first question he put to almost all his acquaintance. And when, on the Saturday evening, the London preacher, alighting from the stage which passed through Studham, was met at the Bull and Gridiron by the farmer's taxed cart, and driven into Monk Teynton by his eldest son, then, indeed, the founder of the chapel felt that the proudest day of his life was approaching.

We shall again have recourse to the veracious print which we lately quoted for a description of that day's proceedings.

"On Sunday last, the 24th instant, the new Independent chapel of Monk Teynton was opened for Divine worship. We understand that it is entirely the erection of one munificent individual, John Harris, of Coolshut Farm, Esq. The poor of Teynton will thus at length have access to that Gospel which is preached to them, but from which Mother Church, in the plenitude of her care for her portly prelates and well-fed dignitaries, contrives in great measure to exclude them. The chapel was crowded to excess: and we were sorry to observe, that though a neat and capacious building, many were unable to find entrance. The Rev. —. ——, of London, preached. The eloquence of this devoted minister is so well known, that our praise can add nothing to his reputation: it was generally thought by his nu-

merous admirers that he surpassed himself on the present occasion. We observed that his voice faltered as he alluded to the exertions of the respected founder of the chapel, and the persecutions to which he had been exposed from the vicar of Teynton: and the conclusion of the discourse, in which he dilated on the various efforts now made, throughout the length and breadth of our land, by the partizans of the voluntary system, was at once touching and animated. The reverend gentleman addressed an equally large and attentive congregation in the evening, when prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Jupp, who is to have the pastoral superintendence of the chapel; and whose eloquent lectures on the voluntary system, and on the advantages of free-trade, must be fresh in the recollection of many of our hearers. The collection at the doors amounted to £7. 6*s.* 8*d.*"

As a pecuniary speculation, the undertaking wore at the outset the appearance of a failure. The money, indeed, was unpaid; but Mr. Stubbing was clamorous, and the settlement could not be much longer delayed. Mr. Harris prevailed on three other persons to become, with himself, under the title of trustees, the owners of the fourth part of the chapel, each on condition, that after paying Jupp £25 a year, the revenue arising from pew rents should be divided equally. The first year's accounts, however, were hardly more favourable than those at the outset. They stood thus:—

Dr.	£.	s.	d.
To Carpenters, for repairing and mending the pews, where injured by dry-rot	23	6	0
To Bricklayers, for rebuilding the frontage, and restuccoing it	32	7	0
Minister's salary	25	0	0
Sundries	4	7	9
	£85	0	9

Cr.	£.	s.	d.
To eight pews at three pounds each	24	0	0
To five, at two pounds	10	0	0
To occasional collection	1	17	0
	£35	17	0
Leaving a balance *per contra* of	£49	3	9

And of this, Mr. Harris had to bear a fourth part. The trustees, however, consoled themselves with the reflection that the heavy expenses for repairing arose from the mismanagement or knavery of "that rascal, Stubbing," and would not occur again, and that in the meanwhile they could avoid the expense of a church rate, on the plea of being "conscientious dissenters:" knowing that the vicar was too fond of his own ease to bring matters against them to extremity. The second year of the chapel's account was now drawing to a close: and though the congregation had, since George Morley's accession to the curacy, considerably diminished, it was rumoured that it would be found "a paying concern."

"O, my dear Miss Morley," said Mrs. Laxing-

ton to Sir John Morley's daughter, as they met in the village a few days subsequently to the date of the last conversation, "I hope you mean to look in upon us to-night! I hear from William Tomkins, that there will be nearly two hundred, for certain, and there are to be some of the Studham band, and I believe one or two of the ministers from Studham, and I have been working my fingers off to make a gay flag; the stuff cost me two and sevenpence, if it cost a farthing, to say nothing of the time and trouble. By the way, let me recommend you always to get your needles at Hensman's at Studham, not at Smith and Paynter's. I used to deal with them, but their needles were always breaking; now Hensman's you may depend upon. But, as I was saying, I do hope you will come. I heard say, Sir John does not quite approve of it; but to be sure he can make no objection to your being there. I know that there will be a good many dissenters, and that you are rather particular as to mixing with them; but dear me! if we can't meet them on such ground as this, where is one to meet them?"

"Really," said Catherine Morley, "I don't understand what it is you refer to. What is this party of which you are speaking?"

"Bless me! is it possible you haven't heard? Why, to-night will be the first meeting of the Monk Teynton Teetotal Association: and we are to meet in the Independent chapel. Why all the village has known of it this week past. I know it was talked of at least as much as that ago, because when I was

down at Clarke's last Tuesday, he knew it well, and meant to shut up his shop this evening, on purpose. And that reminds me, my dear Miss Morley,—you know I have the greatest respect and esteem for your brother, and I think him an excellent preacher, and I am sure he is a very good scholar, and a very worthy minister. But do you know; now, I beg you will not be offended, for I really wish you well, and, as I said the other day to Sally Weeks, when I told her that her husband was the greatest rogue in the parish, Sally, I said, I only tell you so for your good; but as I was saying, don't you think he might be a little more cautious and guarded in speaking about dissent? Mr. Jupp sent to London lately for a little bundle of tracts which he thought might do good in the present state of affairs, when, as every one allows, there is the greatest danger from Popery and Puseyism, and he was kind enough to give me a quarter of a hundred. Stop; I think I have one or two with me; but I have given away a great number. O, yes! here it is:—if you like to keep it, you are very welcome to it."

Catherine Morley had never before seen one of the Protestant handbills published by Seeley: that now put into her hand was entitled, "What is Puseyism?"

"It is to say that the Apostate Church of Rome, the Antichrist spoken of in Scripture, is a true Church:

"It is to take tithe of mint, anise, and cum-

min, neglecting the weightier matters of the law:

"It is to insist on the introduction of obsolete and Popish vestments, of which Latimer, a glorious martyr, expressed his opinion that they were 'fools' coats:' and which Hooper, another glorious martyr, went to prison rather than wear:

"It is to pray to the Virgin Mary, instead of to GOD:

"It is to put tradition before the Scriptures, and the Fathers in the place of the Apostles:

"It is to pray for souls in purgatory:

"It is to traduce and vilify the glorious Reformation, on which the Established Church was founded:

"It is to deny salvation to all who are not members of the Establishment.

"'Woe unto you! for ye lade men with burthens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burthens with one of your fingers.'—LUKE xi. 46.

"'Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after CHRIST.'"—COL. ii. 5.

Accustomed to subdue a naturally high spirit, it was not without a struggle that Catherine forced herself to answer her friend, after having perused the handbill.

"Really, Mrs. Laxington, if you will excuse my saying so, I think that this is hardly the sort of

production to do much good in the village. Granting it to be all true, might not the same truths have been stated a little less bitterly? But it is not true: I am sure that no set of men, not even Romanists themselves, taught many of the doctrines which are here set down to the Puseyites, as you call them. Yet I do not wonder that Mr. Jupp is anxious to distribute these papers; for they are evidently written by a dissenter in heart, if not in profession; but you and I, Mrs. Laxington, who profess to love our Church, should hardly, I think, lend ourselves to disperse what is really written against it, though professing only to be directed against a party in it."

"Well now! you don't say so!" cried Mrs. Laxington. "I am sure I had no idea that there was any harm in the bill, or I wouldn't have distributed it for the world. Dear me! written against the Church, you say! Well, I *am* very sorry; and so, I'm sure, will poor Mr. Jupp be. I must tell him about it to-night at the meeting. But now, really, won't you be there?"

"You say yourself," said Miss Morley, "that my father objects to it; and that would be, you know, quite sufficient reason to prevent my going, even if I had no objection of my own to the whole thing."

"Well, I wonder to hear you say so," answered Mrs. Laxington. "I know you generally approve of whatever Mr. Wallis does, and he has promised just to look in—after the opening prayer, that is;

which he thought, considering all circumstances, he could not come to so well."

"I beg your pardon for doubting it," said Miss Morley, "but are you quite sure that you are correctly informed? Because I know that when Mr. Wallis dined with us the other day, he was directly opposed to your intended meeting."

"Quite sure of it, my dear Miss Morley; I met him just now down by Collard's End. I think he was going to call on Mr. Trenton, because I saw him turn up the lane afterwards—and that reminds me,—what a sad condition that lane is in. Hawkins, Mr. Trenton's coachman, told my maid Betty the other day, that in wet weather the horses could hardly get along: it's a perfect shame that the parish don't repair it—but, as I was saying, I met Mr. Wallis down there, and I said to him, 'Shall we have the pleasure of seeing you,' I said, 'for half an hour or so this evening?' 'Why yes,' he said, 'I think I shall look in. I did not intend to have done so; but I should give offence if I did not, and it will be expected, and so I think I shall.' So you see I have my information from the very best possible source. O! good morning, Mr. Morley: always busy in the parish! Well, I hardly know how you clergymen contrive to get through so much business. Visiting in the day, and sermon-writing in the night. I am sure it makes me tired only to think of it."

"I think I may return the compliment, Mrs. Laxington, as to employment: for that bundle under

your arm does not look as if you were very idle to-day."

"Indeed I am not," she replied: "I shall leave your sister to tell you the why and the wherefore. As for me, I've a hundred places to call at before the evening. Good morning, Miss Morley! I will let you know to-morrow how the thing went off, if I don't see you there: good morning, Mr. Morley! I've been giving your sister a word of advice for you —you must not be offended at an old friend speaking plainly, you know."

"Has she been talking to you about the tee-total meeting to-night, Catherine?" asked George Morley.

"She has, indeed; and she tells me, what I can hardly believe, that Mr. Wallis is to be there."

"It is unfortunately too true," returned her brother; "it seems he dined yesterday with Mr. Trenton, and was persuaded to join it, though I think he does not above half approve of it. He wanted me to go too, but I was really forced to tell him that that was perfectly impossible."

"Just look at this paper, George. It is an importation of Mr. Jupp's; and Mrs. Laxington has been busying herself in distributing them. Is it not perfectly shameful?" she continued, as the colour came into her cheek.

"Did you never see any of these before? Why, in some places they are as common as dust. Shameful! Yes: but I have seen many much worse than

this. I suppose Mr. Jupp begins to find, that when true Church principles are preached, however feebly and imperfectly, if only faithfully, schism must and will be weakened. But what was the advice Mrs. Laxington has been giving you about me?"

"O! that you should do more to conciliate the Dissenters than you do. She seemed terribly afraid to bring it out; but that was the sum and substance of her communication."

"I really am seriously vexed about this decision of Mr. Wallis's: for thinking that he did not mean to go—who could think otherwise after what he said the other night?—I spoke much more strongly on the danger and harm of such associations than I should otherwise have done: so now I shall have the credit of setting up against my own vicar, and judging and condemning his proceedings."

"Well, really, George, it is his fault and not yours. I almost wonder the Dissenters were so anxious for the credit of his name."

"What do you think they are going to do at Studham?" inquired George.

"What is it? A teetotal meeting on a grander scale than the Teynton Association can attain?"

"Something worse than that. It seems that the funds of the Studham Dispensary are in a very bad condition; and as there appears no hope of an increase in subscriptions, one of those musical performances of which we have lately heard is about to be given in the church. My father has just told me

the news; and as he thinks that he may have some influence there with Mr. Fortescue, he is gone over to see what can be done. Look! there is young Abberley riding up to our-house! I want much to speak with him: so, if you are coming in, we will go together."

"I am very sorry to hear about these doings at Studham: but I do hope, when the impropriety of the thing is set before Mr. Fortescue, who is not an obstinate man, that he will yield to reason. At all events, it was like papa to do what he could against it, and to do it directly."

CHAPTER IV.

Of the base court of the Temple said our Saviour, Have these things hence! Much less is it to be unhallowed with dances, morrises, meetings at Easter, drinkings, Whitsun ales, Midsummer merrymakes, or the like: nor by stool-ball, foot-ball, wrestlings, wasters, or boys' sports. If such abuse hath been committed, say by whom, [at] whose procurement, countenance, or abetting.

Bishop Montague.—*Visit. Art.* p. 46.

That evening Sir John Morley, on his return from Studham, detailed the result of his expedition. It was unsuccessful. Mr. Fortescue was sorry, very sorry, that any one, and especially any one whose opinion and advice he valued so much as that of his excellent friend Sir John Morley, should object to the scheme, and perhaps, had he known earlier that such objections were entertained, it would have induced him to reconsider the subject. But at present it was too late—quite too late: the committee had been selected, the bills were printed, (Sir John had noticed them on every blank wall within a mile of the town,) the tickets were struck off, and some were

sold, and the principal singers were engaged. It would be quite impossible to alter the arrangements: Mr. Fortescue could only regret, that entered into as they were for a charitable object, any part of them should be considered reprehensible. So Sir John Morley returned, with the belief that the desecration must take place.

After giving the history of his morning occupations, he proceeded to tell his family, having previously made Lady Morley acquainted with it, his plan of giving up the impropriation which he held, and of refunding the money already received by him from it, in the building and endowing a church at Ayton. George Morley could hardly find words to express his joy and thankfulness; and his sister, though she had never before considered the subject, was not likely to differ from the opinion of her father and brothers on a point of Church discipline. Sir John, having already written to his solicitor, now employed himself in preparing letters to Mr. Wallis, and to the Bishop of the diocese. The rest of the family pursued their usual occupations, though somewhat interrupted by the riotous noise of the teetotal meeting, the Cave Adullam happening to be situated just outside one of the park gates.

A circumstance, however, occurred at Studham, which seemed to throw some difficulty in the way of the musical meeting. There lived in the town a retired tradesman, Mr. Wingfield by name, but usually called old Tom Wingfield. He was a bachelor, and

a man of somewhat eccentric habits, but withal well-meaning, and, after his manner, a good Churchman. As he had been mayor more than once, and was known to have more money than his style of living might seem to indicate, he had a good deal of influence in the place. Mr. Wingfield, having seen from the bills with which the town was placarded the plan and nature of the festival, felt himself much aggrieved thereat; inasmuch as he thought that, being a parishioner, he had full and perfect right to enter the church whenever it was opened to the publick; and by no means approved of a system which would compel him to pay for what was freely his own. Being in the habit of acting on his determinations without loss of time, he presented himself at the shop of Mr. Parker, the churchwarden, much about the time that Sir John was in conversation on the same subject with Mr. Fortescue. Mr. Parker's shop was the most fashionable in all Studham: he was the principal bookseller and stationer, and also had a musick warehouse. Here you might see a large advertisement of "New musick at half price;" there were one or two cabinet pianos, and an old Erard's harp, on sale or hire; there were some flutes and accordions exposed to view; and all the musical instruments in the town, and for ten miles around, were under the especial care and superintendence of Mr. Parker. It was he, who to gratify his own taste for performing on the violin, and that of his daughters for exhibiting their skill on the harp and piano re-

spectively, had suggested the scheme of the musical festival, and was now very actively employed in carrying out the necessary arrangements.

"Mr. Parker at home?" asked Mr. Wingfield, presenting himself in the thick coat, and with the knotty oaken stick, which were his inseparable companions at all seasons of the year.

"Mr. Parker *is* at home, sir," replied the shopman, "but he is particularly engaged. Can you leave any message with me, sir, for him?"

"If he's at home," returned the other, "I'll thank you to tell him that I want to speak to him on particular business. Do you hear?"

"I'll tell him so, sir: but I'm really afraid he can't be spoken with just now—he's so very much taken up about our musical festival. Signor Belladonni is with him at this instant, sir."

"I'll wait till he's at leisure, then; but see him I must and will. Tell him that, sir, if you please."

The man presently returned, requesting the visitor to follow him. Mr. Wingfield was accordingly ushered into a back parlour, where sat Mr. Parker. Signor Belladonni, and the Misses Parker, who, beringleted and tricked out in the height of Studham fashion, were occupied in an eager discussion on some piece which it was proposed to perform on the grand occasion.

"My dear sir," said Mr. Parker, "you come in a very busy time; but for the sake of an old friend one would do anything. They tell me that you have

some particular business with me. Is it anything of a private nature? else, perhaps, we may as well discuss it here?"

"The more that hear what I have to say the merrier, so far as I'm concerned, Mr. Churchwarden. I hear that you are going to have a musical performance, a festival, or what you may please to call it, in your church; is that the case?"

"Certainly, sir, it is;" replied the other.

"So far, so good. And I hear that you mean to exclude all who don't take one of your tickets?"

"Undoubtedly, sir; such is our intention."

"Humph! And you call *that* charity?"

"Why, sir, you know the trouble of getting up the thing is great—very great indeed: and we contribute our time and labour to the institution—an excellent one it is."

"Ay, and put your hand in your neighbours' pockets for the money. Well, when I profess to give, I *will* give."

"Sir!" said Mr. Parker.

"Well, I came here to-day, to say that I intend to be there myself, sir."

"I am sure," replied the bookseller, "we shall be most glad to have your countenance in the undertaking. Allow me to remind you, however, that the sooner you provide yourself with a ticket, the better: the reserved seats are almost all gone."

"I mean to come without a ticket," responded

Mr. Wingfield, looking under his eyelids, to see what effect this announcement would produce.

"Ha! ha!" said Mr. Parker; "always fond of a joke, Mr. Wingfield. Seriously speaking, however, you may be inconvenienced if you delay making your purchase."

"Upon my word, Mr. Parker, I am in earnest; I mean to come, and I mean to come without a ticket."

"My dear sir, the thing is impossible. We have given express orders to the beadles to admit no one without a ticket signed by myself and my friend Ross, as secretaries of the festival."

"Well, Mr. Churchwarden," said Wingfield, buttoning up his coat, and looking very obstinate, "we shall see. You throw open the church on a publick occasion. I, a parishioner, present myself for admittance—you refuse me. If that's law, I'm a fool: and if it's not, some other people are. We shall see. Good morning." And out went Mr. Wingfield, leaving the assembled party somewhat astonished at his sudden exit, and singular (to use their own term) delusion.

Mr. Churchwarden Parker happening to meet his colleague, Mr. Ross, that afternoon, and mentioning the interview he had had with "old Wingfield," they were struck with the thought, "What if there should be anything in the objection raised?" And as they were near the rectory, they determined to step in,

and hear Mr. Fortescue's opinion. That gentleman appeared considerably staggered with the consideration, and asked whether Mr. Wingfield seemed determined to persist in his resolution.

"I never saw a more obstinate man, sir," said Mr. Parker: "I really believe that he will make an uproar, if we do not find some way of stopping his mouth."

"What say you," asked Ross, "to presenting him with a ticket? Surely he will give us no further trouble, and the loss will not be much."

"Why," suggested Mr. Fortescue, "that would be rather a dangerous precedent. We should have, I fancy, a good many other parishioners as much set on free admission as this somewhat particular person."

"The best way then would be, perhaps, to admit him without a ticket," said Mr. Parker, "if he is troublesome."

"Perhaps," added the rector, "in the first place, we had better know whether we can legally keep him out, in case he will not pay. If we find that we cannot, and I assure you, gentlemen, I have my doubts on the subject, we will take care that the matter does not become publick at least till the tickets are sold. I will see Mr. Hutchinson this afternoon, and learn his opinion; and if you will look in towards eight o'clock, I will let you know the result. How goes on the sale, Mr. Parker?"

"We have nothing to complain of, sir: out of our

two thousand tickets, we have disposed of nine hundred; and that includes most of the reserved seats and they are still going off very well."

"That's right," replied the rector. "I have been speaking to the carpenters, and they tell me that by beginning early on the Monday morning they can make sure of having everything ready by Wednesday; so that we need not be uneasy on that score."

While these proceedings were going on, Mr. Wingfield was taking steps of another kind. Our readers will remember that we do not propose this somewhat eccentric personage as a subject of imitation; we are merely, as faithful historians, describing what his proceedings actually were on the present occasion. He called at the cottages of one or two labourers whom he knew to be out of work, and fixed an hour for them to call on him "for a job." As soon as they were come, he said:

"Now, my boys, I'll tell you in two words why I've sent for you. There is going to be a great display of musick, as you know, next Wednesday, down at the church. They mean to keep out every one who does not pay ten shillings for a ticket. Now they have no more right to do so, than I have to keep any of you out of your own house. They will be liable to an action if they do it. Every parishioner has a full right to go to church whenever it is thrown open, without paying a farthing. Now I will give each of you, and as many more as you can find who want to earn a little money, half a crown each to do

as I shall tell you. The doors are to be opened at ten o'clock. A little after I shall go there, without a ticket, and try to get in. If they refuse, I shall tell them that I am a parishioner; and if they keep me out, it will be at their peril. Do you do the same, one after another, and quietly, mind you. Bring your wives and children with you, if you like—so much the better. But, mind—no noise—no row of any kind—don't try to get in by force. Dick Holmes, bring me a list of any others—say five and twenty or thirty, that will be willing to do the same, by Tuesday evening next; only you must take care that they are all members of the parish, else they would have no right to the church." Having given them a few more cautions on the necessity of behaving with order and decorum, Mr. Wingfield dismissed his coadjutors, charging them at the same time not to spread the news further than they could help.

Punctual to eight o'clock, the churchwardens called on the rector, and received from him the news, that it was out of the question for them to exclude legally any parishioners from the proposed meeting.

"We might very well let in Mr. Wingfield the first day, and trust to good fortune that the idea of a right to come would not enter into any one else's head," said Ross: "but then, what's to become of us on the Thursday? Every one would be pressing in, and the tickets would be just no use at all."

"If you will leave me to manage it with him," replied Parker, "I think I will answer to settle the whole thing comfortably. I know Wingfield pretty well, and if I can get hold of him the right way, I will bring him round."

"I think we cannot do better," observed the Rector: "and the sooner you see him, Mr. Parker, the more to the purpose. To-night it is almost too late; but to-morrow morning you could perhaps accomplish it."

"Certainly, sir;" answered Parker. And the churchwardens left the rectory.

True to his word, the musickseller was ushered into Mr. Wingfield's parlour at ten o'clock the following morning, and found that gentleman engaged, as his custom was, over his newspaper.

"I am very sorry," he began, "that you should have been led to entertain any feelings hostile to our proposed plan, Mr. Wingfield: I had hoped that we should have been enabled to enlist you as one of the friends of the cause."

"What cause, Mr. Parker?"

"The cause for which we are making this effort, I mean, sir; the Dispensary, which, as our excellent Rector stated in his last charity sermon, is now nearly £200 in debt; and for which, so far as I can see, this is the only chance of regaining a flourishing condition."

"Well, Mr. Parker, I *am* a friend to the cause. I

subscribe my guinea annually: and I am ready, if it is really needed, to put down my ten pound note towards the hospital fund."

"O, sir! no one for a moment doubts your liberality whenever a sacrifice is called for: but at present the case is different. We have hit upon a plan which involves no personal sacrifice, and which will benefit the institution more than any individual could. Nevertheless, you take a different view of the subject: well—that's all perfectly fair—you your way, I mine—that's true liberty. If you have any objection to supporting our festival, I am sure you will do me the favour to accept a ticket. You will be very much pleased: the professionals are all first rate—and our own singers muster pretty strong. I should be sorry any old friend of mine should be excluded from so inviting an opportunity, which will probably never occur again."

"Come, Mr. Parker, fine words butter no parsnips. You have found out that, with or without a ticket, I have a right to come. Come, sir, confess it."

"Really, sir, you have such an odd way of looking at things. I can assure you that I have the greatest pleasure in offering you this ticket; you know it would be perfectly out of the question for you to think of getting in without it; may I hope you will make use of it?"

"Well, sir, I am obliged to you. What time am I to be there?"

"Perhaps you will do me the favour of breakfasting with me previously. I expect a few friends whom you will be pleased with."

"Well, sir, I shall have great pleasure in doing so. What time shall we say?"

"It must not be later than half-past eight; for we begin at ten, and there will be a good deal to settle in the church first."

And after a few more parting words, Mr. Parker left the house, and made a flattering report of his success to his colleague and to Mr. Fortescue.

We must now take a glance at the affairs of Monk Teynton, which we may seem to have forgotten.

To describe the surprise of Mr. Wallis, when Sir John Morley acquainted him with the design he had formed for restoring the impropriation, would be quite impossible. He seemed to doubt whether he heard aright; and when assured of the fact, his expressions of astonishment and of gratitude were mingled together in a most ludicrous manner. The letter from the Bishop was in the same dignified strain of praise as that in which Archbishop, then Bishop Williams, acknowledged a similar good act on the part of Mrs. Ferrar, the mother of Nicholas Ferrar. The deeds were placed in the lawyer's hands; the technical difficulties respecting the foundation of a church at Ayton were met; and the whole affair put in progress. Much conversation took place from day to day on the arrangement and

design of the new church: and it was determined, with the consent of the Bishop, that the ceremony of laying the foundation stone should be attended with some fitting expression of Church feeling. Of course, the opinions of the neighbourhood were different as to the merit of the work; but while most (with the exception of Messrs. Tomkins, Jupp, and their congregations, and Mr. Trenton, who thought, as he phrased it, that "the demand for religious instruction in that spot did not authorize the production of the article") agreed that the design itself was excellent, all condemned the principle on which Sir John acted. To surrender his impropriation, because it *was* an impropriation, seemed to them little short of madness: and Col. Abberley observed to some gentlemen who stood up in favour of the proceeding, "Never tell me, sir, about the man's duty! why, what should *I* do then with my abbey?"

In the mean time, the musical festival approached rapidly. Tuesday evening came: the "celebrated light post coach" to Studham deposited the principal singers at the Bull and Gridiron; galleries of all kinds were erected in the church; Mr. Tappet, the upholsterer, had given his final touches to the arrangements in which he was concerned; the churchwardens had pronounced the whole "a splendid combination of taste, elegance, and economy." Mr. Fortescue suggested one or two alterations, which were promptly attended to: and all the persons principally concerned retired to rest with the happiest anticipations,

and with the knowledge that almost all the tickets had been disposed of.

At half past nine on the following morning Mr. Parker, with his breakfast party, among whom was our friend Mr. Wingfield, went into the church.

"Sweetly pretty indeed!" said one of the ladies, whose talents were soon to "electrify," as the County Herald phrased it, the numerous visitors: "sweetly pretty, really, Mr. Parker, that arrangement," pointing to the orchestra, which projected half way down the church. "But don't you think that curtain will deaden the voice a little? I'm not particular—but I really must trouble you to have it removed."

"Certainly, with the greatest pleasure. Dickson, will you step up and see to that?"

"I say, Parker, this bench will never do," cried a gentleman in the gallery. "Your carpenter has fixed it so near the front, that I can't sit down without breaking my knees."

"It shall be altered, sir, directly. If there is any other change any lady or gentleman can suggest, I am sure I shall be most happy to attend to it?"

"A most energetic person, Mr. Parker, is he not, sir?" inquired the first speaker of Wingfield. "In the whole of my professional experience, I never saw so much talent combined with industry and perseverance; and the energy with which he devotes himself to the cause of your most admirable charity, is praiseworthy in the highest degree."

"Humph! All's grist that goes to the mill," replied the party addressed.

"What a strange old gentleman that is!" whispered the other to one of her lady friends.

"Who, and what is he?"

"I'm sure I don't know: but Mr. Parker asked me as a favour to be particularly civil to him; so I suppose he is some one of importance. I will try him again.

"It must be very gratifying to you to see the support which your friend's design has received from the gentry of Studham, sir."

"The support, ma'am, will be greater than you think for," replied Wingfield.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," cried Parker, "you had perhaps better come into the vestry. It is close upon ten o'clock, and the doors will be thrown open presently."

Into the vestry the party accordingly went; which, being of considerable size, was partitioned off into two rooms, so as to accommodate the ladies with a separate retiring apartment.

"Dickson," said Parker, "how comes it there is no table?"

"Beg your pardon, sir," said Dickson: "it entirely escaped my memory. What had I better do?"

"Why, I don't know," replied the Churchwarden: "what do you think, Ross?"

"Why," said Ross, "there's the Communion Table:—no one wants it—why not bring in that?"

"Excellent idea: you must make haste, Dickson I suppose it will get in at the door."

So the Altar was brought in: and by the time that it was thoroughly fixed in its new position, the fine old bells chimed ten, and the doors were flung open. Carriage after carriage deposited its load at the porch; there were the jangling, and quarrelling, and oaths of rival coachmen; the chaises, flies, gigs, and taxed carts of the various inns were all in requisition: now you might see the portly farmer, in his Sunday suit, following his feathered and flounced wife and daughters, to whose urgent entreaties he had been forced to yield; now it was the sober tradesman, with his family, seduced by the unusual excitement into an extraordinary holiday; now it was the newspaper reporter, smiling his way in, and then gazing with a critical eye on everything and everybody; now—shame that it should be so—the clergyman of some neighbouring village entered the desecrated building; now the country squire and his lady took their place in the reserved seats. Mr. Parker from time to time made his appearance, nodding and smiling to such as he knew, politely inquiring after the accommodations and comfort of those with whom he was not acquainted; and Mr. Wingfield remained in the vestry, not joining in the frivolous conversation of its occupants, but gazing with the utmost perseverance on the brick wall which, at a distance of some three feet, circumscribed his view.

"Miss Baltimore," said Parker, re-entering the

room for about the hundredth time, "I think, if you are ready—it is almost our time—Mr. Styles is already at the organ, and the audience are growing impatient. Will you do me the favour of taking my arm?"

"Mr. Parker, sir," cried the principal beadle, rushing into the vestry, "pray step this way, sir; we are all in an uproar at the door. Here are John Moore and Tom Henderson, and some five or six others, who swear they are parishioners, and have a right to their seats, and that they will take the law of us if we keep them out. What are we to do, sir?"

"Do!" said Parker. "Why go and tell them that I shall send the constable to look after them, if they don't make themselves scarce. Now, Miss Baltimore."

"Beg your pardon, sir," said the beadle, "but I have told them so already. I don't know how to keep my place there, sir; you really had better speak to them, sir."

"This is tiresome enough," said Parker. "Here we are past our time already: I really cannot go to them: send the police at once, either to drive them off, or put them in the round-house."

"Hark ye, Mr. Parker!" said Wingfield, who had been an attentive listener to this dialogue, "if you don't let those men in, I hope and trust they will bring an action against you: and if they don't, why I will. That's all."

"Mr. Wingfield," cried Parker, in a voice between rage and surprise.

"That I will, sir, as sure as my name's Tom Wingfield."

"Do it and welcome, sir. You can't touch me for it."

"Mr. Hutchinson said differently the other day—didn't he? Take care, Parker; take care! You're a clever fellow—but you'll find your cleverness no use in this case."

"Mr. Parker," said Mr. Fortescue, entering hastily, "what *is* the reason of this delay? It has gone a quarter past eleven; and it is only because they are in a church, that people have not given some audible token of their displeasure."

"I don't know where to turn, sir," said Parker. "Here are some rascals at the door, who say they have a right to come in, as being parishioners; and when I desire Smith here to send the police to them, Mr. Wingfield says he'll take the law of me if I do."

"Run, Dickson," said Mr. Fortescue, "and ask Mr. Styles to give them some overture—the sooner the better. Now, Mr. Wingfield, I must say I think this very unneighbourly and unfriendly in you. Supposing that we cannot, according to the letter of the law, shut up the church from any parishioner, you surely need not set on these fellows, and encourage them in their riotous conduct."

"Have they a right to a place, sir, or have they

not? that's the question. If they have not, nothing that I can do can hurt you: if they have, a pretty charity it must be that leads you to make people pay for what's their own, and with their money support your institutions."

"If you persist in taking this view of the case, I suppose we must give way; but allow me to observe, that you at least have no right to speak about charity—we have, at all events, given our time and labour—you have given nothing at all."

"I took the liberty of sending up a twenty pound note to the treasurer last night, as a proof that no ill will to the charity makes me act as I have done to-day."

"Then why, in the name of wonder, Mr. Wingfield, do you annoy your fellow parishioners, and injure the hospital to the utmost of your power?"

"Because, sir," replied Wingfield, "I will not see the name of charity thus prostituted. I will not allow this building, dedicated to the service of God, to be desecrated by being perverted to profane uses. I will not, if I can help it, patiently submit to these wholesale alterations of galleries, and orchestras, and pit. Look at that table, sir, and tell me where it came from!"

"Well, sir," said Ross, "have your own way! Call in all the tag, rag, and bobtail of the place, if you please; our hands are tied. You know your advantage, and will use it. Your fellow-townsmen will know how to use you henceforward."

"Am I to let the men in?" asked the constable.

"Oh yes! all the town if they please. I've nothing more to say," cried Parker. "Now, Miss Baltimore, we *must* come, if you please."

That was the first and last musical festival at Studham.

CHAPTER V.

O my God, make them like unto a wheel, and as the stubble before the wind;—Who say, let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.—Psalm lxxxiii. 13, 12.

Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?—Rom. ii. 22.

If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me.—Numb. xvi. 29.

It happened that on the following day Col. Abberley and his son rode over to Teynton Park. It was the first time that they had visited Sir John Morley, since his determination had been known, and the conversation naturally turned on the subject.

"Sir John," said the Colonel, "I am sure, we at Ayton cannot sufficiently thank you for your munificent design of giving us a church there. I can assure you it is hardly anywhere wanted more. As we pass through the village on Sundays, we see the men lounging about with their pipes in their mouths, the women setting their houses to rights, the wretched children screaming and playing about the street, just as if they were not in a Christian land. I speak

within bounds, when I say that not a dozen attend any place of worship whatever."

"It is a sad example," observed Lady Morley, "of what I have frequently heard remarked; that wherever the Church exercises no influence at all, and consequently, as not existing, cannot be supplanted, the dissenters are never to be found. But where the Church's influence is small, so that a successful rivalry can be set up, there they swarm."

"We have certainly no dissenting place of worship at Ayton," replied Col. Abberley, "whatever the reason may be. I have often wondered that you should have two here, where you are so well off in the Church. But I hope, Sir John, you will allow others to contribute either to the building fund, or else to the endowment."

"Most willingly, Colonel Abberley; and with the greater pleasure, because the funds which I am able at this moment to appropriate to it, will be barely sufficient for both. But I must request it as a favour, that you will not speak of the thing as an act of charity, but of simple justice. I feel that I have, for many years past, been appropriating to myself, property to which I have no right: and having thus, in a certain sense, been committing robbery on the Church, the least I can do is to restore that which I have, though in ignorance or inadvertence, appropriated."

"I am sure, Sir John, your intention throughout the whole matter is so praiseworthy, that every one

is bound to respect your scruples; though I will frankly tell you—and I am sure you will excuse my liberty, for I am really speaking as a friend—that I consider them misplaced, or at least excessively overstrained. And, from what I can learn, the sentiments of the neighbourhood coincide with my own. You know we have several lay rectors around us: it was only yesterday that Mr. Suttley, of Otterbourne, was speaking to me on the subject, and he seemed quite indignant at the reflection, which, as he thought, you had cast on him. I merely mention this, by way of proving that you have certainly done an unpopular thing, and one of which the opposite party will not fail to take advantage in contesting the county."

"To tell you the truth, Col. Abberley, in acting as I have done, the consequences by implication did not occur to me. But if they had, they could have had no possible influence on my conduct; because I only acted out of a principle of duty. I am, of course, sorry, that any one should impute wrong motives to me; I only wish that I could persuade my neighbours to follow my example."

"But now, Sir John, seriously speaking, you cannot mean to assert that all landed proprietors, who possess property which was once the Church's, are bound at once to surrender it to the Church again."

"If it has not been in the first instance fairly purchased from the Church, you mean: yes; I have

no doubt as to what line of conduct every such landowner ought to pursue."

"But consider, in what inextricable confusion many estates would be plunged! How few families are there, who in some one branch or other were not enriched by Church plunder at the Reformation! According to your system, it would be necessary first to examine what grants were made of abbey lands by Henry VIII. to your family at that time. A hundred to one, most country families would find that some part of their property came under this category. But supposing they were fortunate enough to escape this danger; then we have to trace what estates have been acquired since, by purchase or otherwise; and whether they ever belonged to any of the dissolved religious houses. Because, if so, it cannot matter through whose hands they have since passed; they *are* yours, they *were* the Church's, and you must therefore give them up."

"I quite agree with you," said Sir John. "I think every conscientious landowner ought to make such an enquiry as you have mentioned. You will not however find many country families in possession of Church estates, granted to their ancestors by Henry VIII: and that for the very sufficient reason, that hardly any such families now exist."

"You do not mean that their failure in so long a period of years has at all arisen from their connexion with this property? What a triumphant argument do you put into the mouths of Romanists!"

"Let us take care, Col. Abberley, that we do not give them a real ground against us, by defending, and upholding, and thus making ourselves partake in the sins of the Reformation. We have, in itself, a good cause: why weaken it, if not ruin it, by apologising for what admits of no apology. You would not act so in your own profession: you would be forced to confess, that a general, defending an indefensible post, deserves death by the universally allowed laws of war."

"But only consider what this leads to. You allow that monasteries were excellent institutions: that the spirit of the Reformation was a bad one: that the Church has been implicated in the sin of sacrilege ever since, and to all human likelihood, will be implicated in it to the end of the world. Now what is the fact? We know from good authority that the state of the monasteries was awful—they were the hot-beds of all kinds of iniquity—they were founded out of false and superstitious motives, and were the chief means of keeping the land in the darkness and ignorance of popery."

"Let us allow for a moment that monasteries were such as you represent them. Their abuse did not render them less dedicated to God. Grant that they were founded on mistaken motives—that cannot render them profane. We have a most remarkable instance of this in the Holy Scriptures themselves. Who can imagine a case in which we should have thought a dedication to God to be null and void,

if not in the offerings of Dathan and Abiram? Here were laymen and schismatics setting themselves up against the religious ceremonies, and priests of GOD, and making use, in their unauthorized and scandalous ministrations, of certain golden censers. Those who argue on your side of the question would certainly pronounce these polluted in the highest degree. But what was the case? Why, GOD himself pronounced them to be holy: and ordered that the altar should be plated with the gold arising from them. Many excellent men have thought, that on the conversion of any heathen land, it is not only highly expedient to employ the revenues and possessions of the idol temples in the service and for the establishment of Christianity, but that it is sacrilege to put them to any other use. I am disposed to think that even this extreme view of the case is right: how much more were the religious houses—I mean taking even your view of their foundation and abuses—holy? But do not let us excuse the miserable selfishness of the present day, by imputing motives to our ancestors by which they were not influenced. Very few, comparatively speaking, of the abbeys were founded on a dying bed: but if they had been, does not our own Church command Her ministers that they move their parishioners, then above all other times, to be charitable? It is a convenient excuse for us, when we look round at what our forefathers, out of their poverty did, and on what, out of our abundance, we do *not* do, to say that it is owing to our superior

light, and that wealth given out of the fear of purgatory is not given charitably. How unfair would it be, if when we see some benevolent man feeding and clothing the poor, we were to impute his benevolence to the hope that he had of pleasing his Maker, and thereby escaping future punishment! And as to what you say of the state of monasteries at the Reformation—we have learnt, over and over again, to make such assertions, till we really have taught ourselves to believe them. Look at the case as it was. A grasping tyrant sends out his minions to find or make all the charges they could against a certain set of men, whose wealth he was anxious to seize. They made the most diligent inquisition: they were urged on by every motive of rapacity and avarice; they were held back by no possible scruple, and I must say, that it has always appeared to me next to miraculous, that with all their pains, they could find so little matter of accusation, and so few instances of ill-regulated monasteries as there certainly were; and not more of dissolute conduct on the part of individuals: of these probably many were fabricated, and all were more or less exaggerated. Look at the case by comparison: a hundred years after that time, the Puritan rebels issued commissions to enquire into the character and abilities of the parish clergy of England—a body, mark you, not so numerous as the monks in the time of Henry VIII., and against whom, therefore, in proportion, fewer complaints should have been brought forward. Now, I

think we are justified in putting the conscientiousness of Henry's and the Parliamentary Commissioners on much the same footing: both were as bad as they could be. Cromwell the first and Cromwell the second were much on a par, except that the latter was the bolder villain of the two. Now, it is notorious, that although the lives of the clergy in the time of Charles the Martyr were confessedly most pure, and their reputation as unsullied as it was possible for that of any body of men to be; many more and much grosser crimes were laid to their charge than had been to that of the religious houses in the previous century. What, in common fairness, can we draw from this, by way of inference? What, but that, far from being the abodes of vice as you say, the monasteries of the 16th century—and how much more of earlier ages—were as pure, as holy, and as well fulfilling the purposes of their institution, as it was possible that they should be? I do not mean to say that there were not great corruptions, both as to doctrine and discipline, in the then Church; but the former were not connected with the monasteries, and the latter only in the one fault—I acknowledge, a very great one—of their being of extra-episcopal jurisdiction."

"There is a remarkable instance," observed Charles Abberley, who had listened attentively to Sir John, "of the sanctity attaching itself to the very act of dedication—even though the purposes to which it is applied be actually wicked. Our Blessed

SAVIOUR commended the widow who threw her two mites into the Treasury, notwithstanding the sinfulness of those in whose favour the treasury then was; notwithstanding that possibly that very money was a few days afterwards applied to rewarding Judas Iscariot for his betrayal."

"Very true," said Sir John Morley. "But supposing that all the tales against the monasteries were true, was that any reason for suppressing them? The Church, as a Church, was far more corrupted than the monasteries, as monasteries; what then? Was She to be annihilated, or reformed? Look at the foundations of our own day, which approach more nearly to religious houses than any other—I mean our Colleges. Who can deny, that the discipline and good order of these is fearfully degenerated? It is too true, that Fellowships, meant to make their possessors to labour uninterruptedly for the good of the Church, are too often seductive to sloth and self-indulgence; it is too true, that our Church's express injunctions have been permitted to fall into desuetude, that in many instances the Daily Service is so mutilated, as to be hardly the same—and that only in one, out of our thirty-eight colleges, is the weekly communion retained. Grievous scandals there have been and are in its ministration, when it is administered; and doubtless this and many other abuses call for visitation and reformation. But what a monstrous thing would it be—what exclamations of horror

would it create from one end of the kingdom to the other, if any reformer of the nineteenth century should propose to abolish them?"

"There is doubtless much in what you say," replied Col. Abberley, "and perhaps one is naturally prejudiced on the Protestant side of the question; but still I cannot but think that you must necessarily look on the Reformation—if you take this view of its effects—as a bad, instead of a good work."

"Well, my dear Sir, supposing such a consequence followed, which is by no means the case, very different views may and will be taken of the Reformation by those who are equally faithful sons of the Church of England. Have we not episcopal authority for observing, that to point out its errors, and lament its sacrileges, is not inconsistent with the truest devotion to our Holy Mother. Therefore, a consideration like that which you have just named would never alarm me. The truth of the matter, however, is, that the dissolution of the religious houses was but an accident in, not an essential part of, that movement which ended in the Reformation. You say that the Church has become implicated in the sin of sacrilege? When and how? She has always protested against it, sometimes more, sometimes less explicitly. Her best and wisest sons have, in their different ages, warned of its sin: even Latimer was opposed to it: Whitgift was its decided enemy; Andrewes refused a bishopric rather than

consent to any alienation of the lands of the see: Sir Henry Spelman wrote two elaborate works against it, and that with such good success, that several lay rectors were induced to give up their impropriations: Charles the Martyr vowed the restoration, in case his arms had been crowned with victory, of all the abbey lands in his possession, or of the worth of them, at a fair valuation: Abp. Sheldon brought his father's vow before Charles II. Then Bramhall and Thorndike, and Wells, and Nelson, form a band of catena onwards to our times, of those who have raised their voices against 'that damnable act, the dissolution of the monasteries.'"

"You must allow, however," said Col. Abberley, "that many of our very ablest Divines have considered that the existence of the monastic system necessarily involves that of popery with all its corruptions."

"Many have said so," replied Sir John Morley, "but great divines though they may be, I am not obliged to yield up my judgment to them. You must, as Bramhall says, 'forbear to charge the private errors or opinions of private persons (it sticketh not much whether) upon the Church of England;' many of whom died before controversies were rightly stated or duly understood, for none of which the Church of England is in any way obliged to be responsible."

"But the whole system appears to me to be impossible. There are many cases where it would

seem doubtful whether an estate in question ever belonged to the Church or no: what would you do then?"

"Why, as an honest man would do under similar circumstances, if he had reason to believe that he was possibly defrauding his neighbour of property that belonged to him. I would put the thing into the hands of a lawyer; if I found myself unable, from the technicalities of the case, to resolve it to my own satisfaction: or if, from a fear on the one hand, of losing a valuable estate, or on the other, from an excessive (if there can be an excessive) terror of sacrilege, my prejudices were likely to be in the way of my arrival at a fair and just conclusion."

"But," said the Colonel, "there is nothing at all analogous in the common law to your proposed system. What would you say to a man who brought an action to prove his right and title to your estate; his ancestor, according to his assertion, having been wrongfully deprived of it by your ancestor four hundred years ago? Why, on the face of it, the thing is absurd. A term for the recovery of a debt, or the claim to an estate, has generally, in all civilized nations, been fixed; and it is very proper that prescription should confer a title: or what estate would ever be secure? Now, granting all you say in its full extent, for the sake of argument, as to the sin of the dissolution, why then, I should call in to my aid the well known adage, *Fieri non debuit, factum valet.* We may dismiss the question as to how the

property was originally acquired; badly, let it be: now it is yours without sin on your part, and therefore it cannot be just that you should suffer for a crime of your ancestor's. Nay, if it be unjust that you should suffer for a crime, when the property was originally seized on by one of your progenitors, how much more unjust is it that you should be punished for an ill-advised purchase on his part of Church property, from some other party! Where is this to end? Who is to be safe? I am sure, if you will candidly consider the excessive misery in which you would involve many of our best families, were your hypothesis valid, that you would see the injudiciousness, to call it by no harsher name, of bringing it forward."

"It is not precisely correct," answered Sir John, "to say that in common law there is no analogy to the scheme, as you call it, which I have been acting on. Look at the case of a man who has become a bankrupt, and after giving up his last farthing, has again set up in business, and has realized a considerable fortune. How many an honourably-minded man, under such circumstances, has voluntarily repaid to his creditors his previously contracted debts! How often, even, has this been done by the son of a bankrupt! This, of course, is a purely spontaneous act; but in this case the world stamps it with its approbation. We hear on all sides exclamations such as:—Truly noble conduct! High principle! What a pattern of generosity! And, here, no one thinks of

the reflection tacitly passed on those bankrupts who have acted differently. But there is a case in which restitution is compellable by law. If a deed or document belonging to any corporation comes into the possession of any other party, no matter what price that party has paid for it, the corporation can claim it at once; and, at whatever loss, it must be surrendered. Shall this be the way of the world, and shall not the principle, once the Church's always the Church's, be acted on by Christians? However, I acknowledge that the hardship of having to give up perhaps the greater part of their property,—though this is an extreme, and very rare case—seems at first very great. Still, there is nothing contrary to the analogy of God's dealings with man, in this. It is but an instance in which the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. And to those families who, convinced of the fearful sin in which they have hitherto through ignorance been implicated, prefer comparative poverty to sacrilegious riches, I would say, as the prophet to the Jewish king, 'The Lord is able to give thee much more than this.' However, after all, as respects those families themselves, my advice would be the kindest, as well as the justest. Who can doubt that a particular curse has attached itself to abbey lands; that generation after generation it has watched over them, and that its force has not abated in the flight of three hundred years? It almost reminds one, Mr. Abberley, of the evil fate, so magnificently described

by the tragic poet, that 'with dry, unweeping eyes,' sat by the house of Œdipus. You remember, of course the description—indeed, in me to remind a young scholar of it," he added smiling, "is almost presumption."

"Let us hear it Charles," said his father. "My classical lore has long since become useless to me."

"It is," answered Charles, "where the two sons of Œdipus having been solemnly cursed by their father; the one, king of Thebes, is besieged by the other, who aspires to the throne; and who with six companions, assaults, each in his own position, the seven gates of the city. Eteocles, for so was the king called, hears with the greatest coolness and deliberation the names of the six other champions, appoints antagonists to them, gives orders as to the defence, stills the weeping of the terrified multitude, and exhibits in himself the careful governor and general. But when his brother's name is mentioned, the curse descends upon him, disorders his plans, frenzies his imagination, and drives him forth to be slain by, and to slay his brother."

"But why," said the Colonel, "should such terrible consequences follow this crime in particular, when so many others of equal blackness, escape unpunished?"

"In the first place," replied Sir John, "there is not any other crime which can implicate one generation after another as this does. In the second, you know that at the foundation of any Church or Reli-

gious House, a solemn curse was pronounced, with the most dreadful formalities, on its violators or destroyers. And with respect to the voice of the Church, verily, 'he whom She blesseth is blessed, and he whom She curseth is cursed.' And so it is in the present case. You see some family with broad lands and high honours; from age to age they struggle on through all the changes and chances of revolutions, and the vicissitudes of governments. Sometimes its existence depends on the life of a sickly child: the sickly child becomes a healthy man, and his children multiply. Sometimes the only male heir is exposed to all the dangers of war: and among them all he seems to bear a charmed life. He returns to a happy home, and in a few years the family seems more securely established than ever. While in its most flourishing condition, in an evil hour it acquires Church property. The curse descends at once: thenceforward strange accidents and losses occur: fire, and robbery, and sickness do their work; male heirs fail; jealousy springs up between man and wife; unnatural hatred between parents and children; a sickly season carries off one, a violent death, another; a third sails to a foreign land and is never more heard of. Whatever scheme is undertaken fails; wealth makes itself wings, and flies away; moth corrupts, and the thief destroys. And all this while, the curse, with its tearless eyes, seems to watch every motion of its victims; crosses them in their best laid plans; entraps them in an

inextricable web; perplexes, and harasses, and impoverishes, and weakens, and ruins, and only leaves them when the last heir is laid in the family vault. Then the crime of sacrilege seems expiated."

"This is a fearful picture, Sir John. Is it not an overcharged one?"

"For that," replied Sir John Morley, "I will boldly appeal to English history; especially to family history. But look at the case *à priori*. What has ever been the fate of sacrilege? Look at the Holy Scriptures: take Belshazzar's case. There you see an idolatrous and vicious prince, giving himself up to his own heart's lust—exceeding his predecessors in wickedness; setting himself to do evil—and yet spared. How often, in all likelihood, had he 'praised the idols of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone!' And yet he had time and space afforded him for repentance. At last, he sends for the Temple vessels, and prostitutes them to his idol worship. What follows? 'IN THAT NIGHT was Belshazzar, King of the Chaldæans, slain.' Look again at Pompey. An experienced general, strong in the affection of his country, relying on a prosperous army, engaged, on the whole, in a right cause, he entered into the holy of holies, and he never prospered again. And where does the infidel historian date the commencement of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Enpire? With the reign of him who destroyed the temple at Jerusalem! Now look back to our Reformation. Is it not notorious

that of the families enriched by the abbey spoils very few remain to the present day; and those, after having passed through severe losses, and fearful judgments? Is it not also certain that abbey lands very seldom continue more than two, or three generations at most in a family? Can any one deny that, where more grievous judgments have not befallen the occupiers, the failure of heirs male has been as singular as it is inexplicable? Is it not a fact; so deeply has sacrilege eaten into our families; that scarcely any are now in possession of the same estates which they held at the Reformation, while a period of five hundred years was, before that time, no unusual term of occupancy for one family? If any one denies these things, I would refer him, first, to Sir Henry Spelman's 'History of Sacrilege.' If he says that this is the production of a special pleader for restitution, then I would ask him to look at any county history. Examine, I would say, the list of the families, once of note in it, now extinct: and see if nine-tenths of these were not implicated in Church property. Then look at the history of the succession of families in abbey estates, and see if these do not change their owners ten times, for one change in other property, and if the decay of any family is not consequent on its touching Church possessions. I ask any candid person to examine the matter for himself; if facts ever proved any thing, they prove what I am saying. And, do not imagine, that I look on the Reformation as the only time in

which sacrilege has polluted England. William the Conqueror and William Rufus are fearful instances of God's judgments against church violators. The first lays waste twenty villages to form a hunting forest. He dies by a strange disease, neglected, deserted, despised: his corpse becomes intolerable to those who would have attended it: it is at first denied hallowed ground; and at length hastily and dishonourably committed to its resting place. The second, hunting in that same forest, is shot, under mysterious circumstances, by a hand unknown, with the name of the enemy of mankind in his mouth; is 'buried with the burial of an ass;' and leaves his name as a curse. Indeed, I know no more terrible illustration of the truth of what I have been saying than 'The last Hunt of William Rufus.' Again, I will not say that the death of Lord Brooke was, strictly speaking, supernatural; but the inveteracy of his hatred to the material fabric of the Church! his being given over to a strong delusion that he was doing God service; the arm by which he was shot; the distance at which the aim took effect; the circumstance that the bullet entered that eye with which he had hoped to see the destruction of all the cathedrals; all these things seem to say distinctly: This is the finger of God! No, no; it is of no use saying that by the analogy of earthly justice we are not compelled to restore Church property. He has taken the matter into His own hands. His servants, in founding their religious houses, denounced, with

fearful solemnity, a solemn curse on those who should alienate them: He has fulfilled that curse; He is fulfilling it. May He open men's eyes to discern their danger!"

Sir John paused: and after a minute's silence, Col. Abberley rose to take leave. What he thought of his friend's arguments, will appear hereafter.

CHAPTER VI.

As true it is of the last, as of the first Church. 'I prove thee also at the waters of strife.' Those waters, the waters of Meribah, will hardly be drained ever.

BISHOP ANDREWES, ii. 407.

"MY dear love," cried Lady Morley, as her visitors took their departure, "what *have* you been saying? I am afraid Col. Abberley will be mortally offended: he must have thought every thing you said quite personal."

"Not he," replied her husband; "he has too much good sense: he entered on the discussion himself, and I could but give him my opinions, as he asked for them. I am truly sorry that so well disposed a man as he seems, should have fallen into the error, for in his case it was only an error, of making that unfortunate purchase. I believe he is in his heart half sorry for having done so."

"O, Lady Morley!" cried Mrs. Laxington, entering, after having briefly noticed Sir John and his daughter: "*have* you heard of the doings at Studham? I never did, in all my days, see any thing to

compare to them; perfectly incomprehensible, as I said to Mr. Fortescue; and he agreed with me. A very pleasant man, by the bye, Mr. Fortescue seems: I'm sure he was civility itself to me; would drive me over here in his gig: glad enough I was to come in it. I don't know how long I should have had to wait. The horses were all engaged, and almost worked to death this hot weather, poor things! But as I was saying, what a strange interruption it was!"

"But what was it?" asked Lady Morley. "You have forgotten to tell us that."

"Why, my dear Lady Morley, there happens to be in Studham an odd old man, whom they call Tom Wingfield; and he took it into his head that all the parishioners had a right to come to the church, whether they paid or not. Preposterous! wasn't it? However, he brought a quantity of what poor dear Mr. Laxington used to call 'tag rag and bob tail' to the doors, and there they made such a riot that Mr. Fortescue for peace sake was forced to let some of them in. Well, this was the first day, and the performances were begun, so it did no great harm; but the next morning, before the doors were thrown open, there were near a hundred at the entrance, blocking up the passage, and hindering those who had paid from getting in. There were constables and policemen, and I know not what all: such a confusion and shouting, and scolding, and gabberings, I never heard before. Some wanted to give the ringleaders over

to the police: but that it seems couldn't be done: some said there had better be no performance at all. Well! at last; would you believe it? all this rabble got in; and the consequence was, that when a great many of those who had paid for their seats got to them, they could not have them—and that made another uproar. However, I *will* say, the music was sweetly well performed when we got to it, and nothing could be better arranged in every other respect. But what Mr. Fortescue will do to satisfy those who had taken tickets, and were turned away after all, I am sure I can't say."

"You must excuse me, Mrs. Laxington," said Sir John, laughing, "but really I cannot be sorry at this discomfiture of the church-desecration system. I hope it will be a lesson to the Studham folks, to be sure they have a right to the exclusive possession of a place, before they lay hands on it."

"What, Sir John, do you mean that you think Mr. Wingfield was right in creating such an uproar? Dear me! my poor head aches with it, I'm sure. I only wish you could have heard it yourself."

"Nay, then you should rather congratulate me on having escaped the annoyance. Of course, if Mr. Wingfield, or any one else, made a disturbance at, or in the church, they were very wrong; but if they only asserted a right which every parishioner has, and of which they were then deprived, in my opinion they were very right."

"But only think of the visitors who had paid for

their seats, and then could not have them! Don't you think that that was a great hardship?"

"They should have been sure that the persons of whom they hired them had a right to let them. What should you say, if I were to let out the different rooms in your house for a few hours on some particular day, without your leave? Should you say that you were dealing hardly by those who had paid for them, if you refused to let them enjoy what they had hired?"

"You put such very odd cases, Sir John: nobody thinks of letting out rooms in another person's private house. The thing is absurd on the face of it."

"Not a bit more absurd, in reality, than the letting out a church to non-parishioners, and not a bit more illegal, I can assure you."

"Are you in earnest?" asked the lady. "Well! now, if that's the case, it alters the whole question. I had no idea it was so. But the music was very fine, and I'm glad I was there; for it is not often that one has such a treat. And there's nothing, as I was saying to Mrs. Fortescue, that so improves the taste as good music; indeed, she and all her family are passionately fond of it. But indeed, Miss Morley, I don't mean that they can compare with your performances. And that reminds me: I have heard that Mr. Fortescue was going to leave Studham. Have you heard any thing about it, Sir John?"

Sir John replied in the negative, and the conversation took a general turn.

It was a happy evening in Teynton Park, that, no long time subsequently, witnessed the arrival of the elevations and ground-plans of the proposed church at Ayton. The whole party, with the addition of Charles Abberley, a very frequent visitor, were soon engaged in unrolling the sheets, and holding them down so as to display them to the best advantage. First, came the south elevation: there was the well-proportioned chancel, with its simple priest's door, and elegantly pierced parapet: there was the nave with its fair porch, and, rising above its sharp roof, the tower with its light spire. Then came the east end: a fine decorated window of five lights with complicated tracery, and the floriated cross, surmounting the apex of the gable. Then there was the interior with its seven nave piers, well developed chancel arch, and altar raised on a flight of seemly steps: the stone pulpit projecting from the north side of the chancel arch, eagle with expanded wings, and litany stool: while on each side were the open seats, with which alone such a church would of course be furnished.

"Upon my word," exclaimed Sir John, "this design does our architect great credit. At the first glance, I really hardly see any thing which I could wish altered. Does any fault occur to any of you?" he asked, looking round on his family. One or two suggestions were made, and one or two questions asked; but every one was loud in praise. Charles

Abberley was more silent: perhaps he was contrasting his father's conduct, as occupier of what was once holy ground, with that of Sir John, the founder of another temple for the glory of God. The papers were still on the table, and the discussion on their merits not yet finished, when in the yet unfaded twilight, a servant was seen riding up the park at a quick pace.

"The Donnington livery," said Robert Morley, looking up carelessly. "What can the Earl have to say to us?"

"O, some invitation to dinner, I suppose," said his father. "I think, then, I may just mention these few alterations to Mr. Wykeham, and tell him that they are all made in deference to his better judgment."

"I think," said Robert, "that the effect of the roof would be better if the space between the ridge and the intersection of the collar braces were a little greater. What say you, too, to a shield, sculptured with different symbols; such as the instruments of crucifixion, a Holy Lamb, and so forth, at the end of the hammer beams."

A servant here entered with a letter for George Morley, and "No answer, sir."

"Capital idea that, Robert;" said his father: "you may as well write the letter as myself, and then you can explain the matter. One thing I mean to be particular about; we will have a sufficient

variety of designs in the seating: I object exceedingly to seeing a whole series of stall ends carved in one device, as if their designer had but one idea."

"And that one," added Robert, "like Dr. Johnson's friend's, a wrong one."

"This is perfectly incomprehensible," cried George Morley. "I never spoke to the Earl of Donnington above twice or three times in my life."

"What is it, George?" said Robert.

"Read that letter," replied his brother.

"What, read aloud?" inquired Robert? And being answered in the affirmative, he read as follows:—

"Donnington Park, June 19, 183—.

"Dear Sir,

"The living of Studham, which is in my gift, is just vacant by the resignation of Mr. Fortescue. I am exceedingly desirous that a parish of such extent and importance should be favoured with efficient pastoral superintendence; and am therefore induced, though the value of the incumbency is, I regret to say, comparatively small, to offer it to your acceptance, should you be disposed to undertake so laborious a post of duty.

"Circumstances render me desirous of receiving an answer as to your determination at your earliest convenience. I therefore dispatch a servant this evening, in order to expedite, as much as possible, your reply.

"With my best compliments to Sir John Morley, and to your family,

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Your very faithful servant,

"DONNINGTON."

"Well, George," said Sir John Morley, "I shall not pretend to offer my advice one way or the other. Remember only the importance of a decision which may probably fix you for life: and do not decide hastily.".

"But, my dear father," said George, "this really comes so very suddenly, that I wish you would just give me your ideas on the subject. I never like to trust to my own judgment when I can have better—why should I?"

"What can I tell you, but what you know already? Though you have had some experience in parish duty, you should remember that you are very young—that Studham is a sphere of particular difficulty—and that you will find the parish in a sadly neglected state—and the people, I fear, self-willed and unmanageable. On the other hand, an invitation like this is to be looked on, unless there are any very cogent reasons to the contrary, as a call of Providence. If the post is one of peculiar difficulty, so it is also of peculiar usefulness; and, it seems to me, one where labour will not be thrown away: pecuniary considerations are, of course, entirely secondary; and,

in that point of view, the offer has neither recommendations nor the contrary. Studham is, it is true, of greater value than Teynton: but then you must necessarily keep a curate, and that will pretty nearly, I fancy, equalize them. Thus you have the reasons which immediately occur to me, both *pro* and *con*."

"I hope, George," said Lady Morley, "you will not think of taking any post of duty which you are not confident that you have strength enough to retain. You could not bear to do your work imperfectly; and I could not bear that it should be done at any expense of health and strength, which you have no right to sacrifice."

"Well, George," cried Robert, "if I were you, I would make no more words about it, but take it at once. My father's reasons *pro* seem to me vastly superior to his arguments *con*."

"And if you are somewhat young," added his sister, "to take charge of so large a place, was it not Hooker who told Jewel, that this was a fault which would mend every day?"

"Well, George," said Charles Abberley, "I will wish you joy of your new living; for I am sure you can never stand out against so many good arguments."

"I will not make up my mind till to-morrow," replied his friend: "but I think then it will be fair to give the Earl of Donnington an answer one way or the other."

The morning came; the living was accepted; the patron suitably thanked; the new Rector congratulated, presented, instituted, inducted, settled, furnished with a curate: and by the time that September had brought the lanes and hedges of Monk Teynton into their full beauty, the change was no longer felt as a novelty. Studham was only five miles distant from Teynton; but such was the press of business in which the new Rector found himself involved, that for the first three months, he scarcely spent one night in Teynton Park, confining himself to hasty visits in the day. Sir John at first heard the most astonishing accounts of his son's popularity; every one spoke of the golden opinions which he had won, and of the success which attended all his operations.

"Well! to be sure!" Mrs. Laxington would say; "it's perfectly astonishing to me what Mr. Morley contrives to get through. I hear of him here, and there, and everywhere; whatever good's done, he does it: Mr. Dixon tells me that there never was a minister so much liked there: he was attending Mrs. Warren last week—you know Mrs. Warren, Lady Morley, don't you? No? I thought everybody did: she was the widow of Mr. Smith, the great tallow-chandler, and the most notable woman in her time—a little laid up now, Dixon tells me, with the rheumatism; has never been quite free from it since the great musical festival—sitting in a draught—and by the bye, Sir John, what a dangerous thing a draught

is—I remember poor Mr. Laxington used to tell some famous story about its giving a cold and curing a cold—he was a merry man, was my poor husband —it's given me colds enough—but I never could hear that it cured any—but that was my husband's joke—however, as I was saying, Mrs. Warren told Dixon that to her certain knowledge nobody had been so much followed as Mr. George is—crowds come to hear him: they want him to have a Wednesday evening lecture, but that, I suppose, is too much to ask; and I believe Mr. Morley has some objections to it. Not but that I think Wednesday evening lectures are very good things—Mr. Jupp has one on Thursdays—the day don't matter—but I think something of a sermon in the week is very desirable; I know Mr. Morley has prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays, and talks of having them oftener: but then, you know, that's not the same thing quite; the prayers are all very well to begin with, and I am sure I value them very much, and admire them exceedingly, and all that, for no one is more of a Churchwoman than I am—only one wants something more than prayers—one can pray at home well enough. Indeed, to my mind, prayers twice a week is quite enough; Mr. Jupp was reading to me the other day some remarks in the Record, which he takes in, on that matter; and by the bye, Lady Morley, what an excellent paper that Record is—there's so much depth in what it says—and then its accounts are always so thoroughly to be depended

on—that's the great thing one wants in a newspaper: and, considering they say the editor's a Dissenter, it's not so *very* much opposed to the Church—I am sure it always speaks well of it—and then, you know, it always protests so decidedly against Puseyism and Popery—well, but the Record says, that it's by no means desirable to have prayers even twice a week —but to have them more than that, it says, is "a mark of the Beast"—so clever, isn't it? You know it always means Puseyism by the Beast. So I hope Mr. Morley will be contented with what he does now in that way."

"Well," Sir John would reply, "leaving the merits of the Record out of the question, I do not set much value on ministerial popularity as a criterion of ministerial usefulness at any time—much less at the beginning of a clergyman's career. If you bring me the same report ten years, ay, or ten months hence, I shall think more of it: now, the novelty has as much to do with it as anything else."

And Sir John was right. The parish of Studham was one which had, on account of the frequent change of ministers, been long in a very unsettled condition. It might have been one of the most delightful cures in England, could a sufficient number of clergymen have been engaged in its charge, and some of the outlying hamlets been formed into separate parishes. As it was, its size rendered it a burden far above the strength of any one priest, or indeed two. The town lay prettily enough in a valley; high-wooded hills

sheltered it on three sides, and the river wound through the meadow on the fourth. Beyond and among the recesses of these hills lay the hamlets: the church, a cross building with a low central tower and spire, was situated, as is often the case, at the very edge of the town; by it was the parsonage, a red brick erection of the last century: the high street, with the market house at one end and the bridge at the other, was as gay as those of such towns generally are: there were one or two milliners "from London;" one or two doctors, with bright brass plates over their doors; two lawyers, patronized respectively by Tories and Radicals; grocers, and ironmongers, and bakers; and a large timber wharf (for the river was navigable) close to the bridge. Beyond, standing back among some poplars, were some almshouses, founded in the seventeenth century, a plain row of brick buildings, with their chapel in the middle; where, by the way, the original daily service yet lingered in the shape of morning prayers, read by the master, a layman.

Mr. Thomason, the last Rector before Mr. Fortescue, had been of the Evangelical school, and having held the parish for thirty years, had, of course, brought over many to his own views. There was a Bible Society, a Jews' Society, and a Church Missionary Society: there were meetings among the Sunday school teachers for reading and prayers; and a Thursday evening lecture had been established. Mr. Fortescue held no particular views: he kept up

the institutions of his predecessor when they gave him no trouble; if they did, as in the case of the week-day lecture, he discontinued them. What the effect in the minds of Mr. Thomason's admirers might have been, it is impossible to tell: Mr. Fortescue only held the living for a year, at the expiration of which time, he was presented to one far superior in emolument to Studham, and in which the labour and duty were far less. Almost his last act was the desecration of the church as above related; and against this the Evangelical party, it is but fair to say, protested loudly.

It seemed necessary to give these details, because they will explain the proceedings of some of the party to which we have alluded, as having been fostered by Mr. Thomason, when the course of our narrative leads us to relate them.

Shortly after the last mentioned visit of Mrs. Laxington to Teynton Park, the following letter appeared in the Record, under the title of

SPREAD OF PUSEYISM.

"Sir,

"Perhaps you will allow me a few lines in the columns of your widely spread and invaluable journal, evidently raised up, at the present time, to be the bulwark of our Zion; to expose the means by which a young Tractarian minister has lately endeavoured to thrust the mummeries of 'another gospel' on a parish hitherto noted for the evangelical fervour

of its inhabitants. To many of your readers Studham must be a place of deep interest, as the scene of the labours of the late Mr. Thomason: but the blighting breath of Puseyism has come over the paradise; and we may well tremble for the result. Mr. M——, a young man fresh from college, and puffed up, I too much fear, with honours obtained there, is discountenancing those institutions which it was the joy of Mr. Thomason to have set up: the Bible Society, in particular, has incurred his deadliest hatred; he not only refused to be present at its last anniversary, but warned his parishioners against its evil tendency! The Wednesday evening lecture, once so crowded and useful, he has refused to re-establish. Instead of it, he has introduced the barren mockery of a daily service, which hardly any one attends; he lengthens the already protracted prayers by the addition of that for the Church Militant; he turns, O profane mockery! towards the Communion Table during the recital of the Creed, as if the GOD of the east were not also the GOD of the west, or would favourably regard these superstitious observances of will-worship! His sermons are, of course, filled with the doctrines of his party: the Church, the merits of Saints, the intercession of Mary, are the staple of his discourses; but of that grand truth which is the epitome of the Bible, the rock on which the Established Church is founded, the cause for which our martyred reformers laid down their lives—justification by faith alone, without good works—he

says nothing. How long will our bishops close their eyes to a case like this?

"May you be long spared to pursue the important work for which you have been raised up.

"Your obedient Servant,

"PRESBYTER."

This paper was carried up by Mrs. Laxington to Sir John, within a few days of its publication.

"Ah! Sir John," she said, "you were right, and I wrong: but then, as I was saying to Mr. Trenton, you are always right in such matters: I am very very sorry for Mr. Morley—I hope the parish will come round—but they don't like his new doings, and that's the truth of it: you know, Lady Morley, some people do *not* like to be interfered with, and the Studham folks, I suppose, are that sort of folks: dear me! I don't understand what harm Mr. Morley has done, but Jupp tells me there is quite a party against him in the parish, and a party my poor dear husband used to say, in his odd way, he couldn't bear, except it were at dinner. But young Tomkins tells me—and he ought to know, for his aunt married one of Mendale's sons—the saddler, up in High Street—well, he tells me they're determined, if they can, to drive Mr. Morley away by hook or by crook—for my own part, as I told him, I hope they won't succeed—he would be a loss to the whole country, said I—and if he does stand up for the Church, why, it's no more, I said, than his cloth ought to do—you know no one is a

better Churchwoman than I; and why should we go setting ourselves together by the ears about trifles? And as to what the Record says, Lady Morley, I beg you won't distress yourself about it—it's not stronger language than they're in the habit of using, and I dare say they mean no disrespect to Mr. Morley. Pray don't take it to heart; I assure you, if it were my own son, I shouldn't."

"Oh no!" answered Lady Morley. "I shall endeavour, if I can, to get over the affliction. Indeed, the relations of so many excellent men have had to bear it before now, that I must try to imitate their fortitude. We are going to luncheon, Mrs. Laxington, will you join us?"

CHAPTER VII.

And all Priests and Deacons are to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly, not being let by sickness, or some other urgent cause.—Rubrick.

"Well, Mr. Morley, I don't mean to flatter you, but I must say, I cannot imagine how you contrive to bear up against the fatigue of a daily service."

So spoke Mr. Wallis, on one of the few occasions when George allowed himself to spend an evening at Teynton Park. Besides the family group and the Rector, two others were sharing the circle round the capacious fireplace that night. The one was a Mr. Eversfield, an early friend of Sir John's, and originally a member of the same college, though a few years his senior. He was a bachelor, and lived in London; and being a man of an active turn of mind, and devoted to what he considered the service of true religion, though unfortunately without any sound principles of Churchmanship, he was an efficient member of the committees of many among the religious societies of the metropolis; and a large part of

his income, which was considerable, was devoted to their funds. The other was Charles Abberley, whose visits to Teynton Park were both prolonged and frequent; it may be observed, in passing, that Sir John would have been quite as well pleased that they should be fewer and shorter, and had once or twice, in the most distant possible manner, hinted as much to the visitor himself. It was not that he did not fully appreciate the high principles of young Abberley; but we shall leave him in the sequel to develope his own views.

"Why," answered George, "I really, with the able assistance Mr. Carpenter gives me, have no reason to complain of the fatigue of our services. Indeed, when I can get them as they ought to be, whatever labour there is will become very trifling."

"You mean," said his sister, "because your choir will be of so much assistance to you?"

"Exactly so. With an efficient choir, the demand on a clergyman's physical strength is very small. Suppose he really were unequal to much labour; let us see what the call upon him would be. Of course, he would read till the Venite; the Psalms, the Te Deum, and Benedictus, would be taken from him by the choir; the Lessons, if necessary, might be read by another; there only therefore remains, on ordinary occasions, the Collects and other prayers. That is, perhaps his voice would be in requisition for ten minutes twice a day."

"Yes," said the Rector; "but then there is a large church to fill."

"Alas!" replied George, "I wish there were! I seldom can muster more than thirty—except the children; and if they can hear me, what matters it that I should be audible in every corner of my church?"

"But," continued Mr. Wallis, "the time: how can you contrive to find time for it amidst all your parish duties?"

"Why, we are all bound to find time for the Morning and Evening Service every day, either in publick or private. I look on this as a Clergyman's first duty: then let him find or make time for as much more parochial duty as he can undertake."

"I will freely acknowledge," said Mr. Eversfield, "that the Rubrick to which you refer is one which I would gladly see expunged from the Prayer-Book. Admiring most sincerely our incomparable Liturgy, you will not expect me to say that I can see no imperfections in it; and this is one of them. I think that to assemble a congregation twice every day to hear the same form of prayer, however excellent in itself, must necessarily degenerate into formality, and an offering up of words in which the heart does not join. But still more is such a result to be feared, when a Clergyman, instead of the fervour of extemporary devotions, and the natural flow of a heart rising to God, is tied down, even in private prayer,

to a form intended for publick worship. Some parts of it are actually void of meaning when used by an individual; for example, the Exhortations and the Prayer of S. Chrysostom."

"I never wish that the Church prayers should be the only ones which a Priest should employ in private; I mean, when he is debarred from the publick service of the Church. Nor do I mean to say that they can be employed with so much beauty and propriety any where as in the church. The Exhortation, of course, is only intended to be used there: the Prayer of S. Chrysostom might, perhaps, be employed in addressing that GOD, Who sees so many of His servants coming before Him at the same time in the same words, even though they be far separated from each other. But, though I sincerely hope I may never have the trial of being separated from the daily publick prayers, I am sure, if I were, I should find solace in thinking that hundreds of my brethren, whose names and habitations I know not, and should never know, were, many of them in the same hour, and in the same words, coming into the presence of their GOD and mine. I can conceive hardly anything more realizing the Communion of Saints than such an union."

"Do you mean," said Mr. Eversfield, "that you cannot conceive any form of words better calculated to rouse the feelings and awaken the affections than those of Morning and Evening Service? Why, if one attends church three times on Sunday, the third

repetition of the prayers is almost lost on one's heart."

"That," said George, "is not a parallel case. It was not intended that the Evening Prayers should be said twice, and therefore they may well appear tautologous in such a case. Neither does any one assert, that to have only two daily services is a system which can compare with the seven of the ancient Church, nominally retained, with some corruptions, in the Romish Church. I say nominally, for it is well known that the Belgian Church is the only one in which the Hours are actually said. If ever it should please the rulers and fathers of our Church to restore them to Her, I for one should be rejoiced to celebrate, at Matins, our SAVIOUR'S Betrayal; at Prime, His Cruel Mockery and Scourging; at Tierce, His Condemnation to death; at Sexts, His Crucifixion; at Nones, His Death; at Vespers, His Taking down from the Cross; and at Compline, His Burial. If there be a change at all, this is the direction in which it must go."

"Well," said Mr. Eversfield, "I will never believe that our Reformers intended these observances to be perpetuated."

"I must say that that view of the case," replied George Morley, "does appear to me truly extraordinary. If ever there was a design to render an institution perpetual, it is here. You are to remember that the rubrick of which you complain was not in the second Prayer-Book of King Edward— it was

actually inserted in an after revision. Does this look like a wish to allow the service to drop? It appears, so far from its having been designed as a stepping-stone from the multiform ritual of the unreformed Church to Genevan worship, or, rather, no-worship, that after being once disused, it was purposely restored."

"Well," said the other, "whatever they thought of the matter, the monotony is an objection which I for one could never get over."

"On the contrary," replied George, "that very sameness is no bad type of the character of that Church which is immutable in the immutability of her word. Here it meets you with the same aspect, however different may be your own feelings; it stands out above human feelings, stamped with something of the changelessness of another world. Your heart may be broken with sorrow, or overflowing with joy: but the promises which the Church sets before you vary not; and therein is their great consolation. She seems to make her sons feel that their light affliction, or transient joy, are nothing with the exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Might you choose, in a time of sadness, or the contrary, such passages as seemed to you most applicable, what were this but to invest religious duties with something of the littleness of passing events? As it is, the Church seems to reiterate, morning and evening, 'But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, therefore, that they that weep be as though

they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not.'"

"But," said Sir John, "you must not forget one chief argument, if an express injunction of the Church needed arguments, in favour of the Daily Service; I mean the inestimable blessing of the daily intercession thus made for our country at the throne of GOD. What ideas must the members of other Churches form of us, when they find this system of supplication, expressly commanded both by the Scripture, and practised by almost all the Church Catholick, neglected? And who can tell, were every village church throughout the kingdom to pour forth morning and evening its intercessions, what would be the effect of prayer in bringing down a blessing on our land? We hear of publick meetings convened to consider the causes of the existing distress of the country—the subject is brought forward in the houses of parliament—all kinds of remedies, possible and impossible, are proposed: but the great remedy, prayer, would find very little credit in the eyes of modern politicians. Yet, granting its efficacy—and what Christian will deny it? how can it rise so unanimously, so constantly, and therefore so acceptably to God, as by this method? What evil is there, to which either nations or individuals are subject, that is not deprecated in our services? What good that they can need that is not sought? If prayer is heard above, what (for aught we can tell) might be the visible effect on national prosperity, of

the morning and evening sacrifice from twelve thousand temples at once?"

"The private use of the Daily Office," remarked George, "is very important, if it were only as setting before us so clearly, and keeping before us so constantly, the great duty of intercession. In morning prayer, for example, there are nine different collects; of these four pertain to ourselves, four are for others, and the remaining one is the general thanksgiving. So in the Litany, there are thirty-four petitions; eighteen for others, and sixteen only for ourselves. The spirit of modern devotion would, I fear, come far short of this: intercession, if recognized at all for any beyond our immediate friends, deals almost exclusively in generalities, and those summed up in a few brief petitions. And if it is necessary to remind all of the duty of making prayers and intercessions and giving of thanks for all men, much more should the Clergy, the appointed intercessors for GOD's people, be reminded of their duty in this respect."

"I have often been struck," said Charles Abberley, "by, if I may so speak, the graphical way in which the various persons for whom intercession is made are, in the prayers of our older Divines, mentioned and particularized. How Bishop Andrewes, for instance, loves to dilate on the various circumstances and necessities in which they may be placed. Here, for example," he continued, taking up an original edition of Bishop Andrewes's Devotions, which lay on the table, "he specifies the Church Catholick,

the Churches of the East, West, and our own land; the King, Queen, nobility, privy council, magistrates, armies engaged in warfare against infidels, husbandmen and shepherds, fishermen and mariners, merchants, handicraftsmen, the mechanick, the beggar, universities and colleges, the sick, the wretched, the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the prisoners, miners, galley-slaves, strangers, exiles, the condemned to death, the lunatick, the unburied. What fervour must such a particular enumeration add to prayer?"

"You say very truly," said Sir John: "however, let us not forget that the great reason for the Daily Service is not the blessing which it would prove to the nation, nor the advantage it brings to ourselves, but its being the particular and express command of the Church."

"There are strong grounds," said Mr. Eversfield, "for the belief which the Record newspaper has lately supported—that our reformers, had they lived now, would gladly have substituted for it family prayer."

"Really," answered Sir John, "I am not called on to prove a negative. But if they would, it does not in the least alter our duty; we are bound to obey the voice of the Church; and that voice, thank GOD, is on our side. I do wonder, however, my dear Eversfield, that you should allow yourself to quote that newspaper as an authority. Nothing shows more strongly the low state of true, deep, religion amongst us, than the toleration of such a print in

any family professing religion at all. Are not its falsehoods so notorious, that many of its supporters make no attempt at excusing or palliating them, but merely allege in their own defence, that no where else can they get the information they want? Would not the neglect which it evinces of the commonest principles of truth and honour, be scouted by papers which make no pretension to religion at all? Can you give me an example—I mean from publications not notoriously infamous—if any where private scandal is seized with such avidity, and divulged with so little inquiry as to its foundation? And yet this paper, the falsehoods, and scurrility, and scandal of which even those who support it profess to disapprove and to lament, has a vast circulation, for a long time exercised vast influence, and is quoted as an authority and paraded as a testimony! I wish, Eversfield, you would look on this matter as a plain straightforward Christian should look. Were I of the Evangelical party, nothing would cause me bitterer grief than that my views and those of the publication in question should be confounded. Sooner or later, the iniquity which has concocted its leading articles, and the malignancy which breathes through them, must be made manifest to all, and the reaction against the party which has supported it will be, perhaps beyond their deserts, terrible. But these are low grounds. For the sake of religion itself, which is never so much wounded as when the sceptick observes its professed advocates guilty of immorality

which even his own code would not allow, and with the knowledge that the wrath of man never can work the righteousness of God, I do entreat you to look more deeply into this matter."

Mr. Eversfield did not reply: and a slight move having been made among the party, Sir John Morley found himself next to George, and at a little distance from the others.

"I am sorry, George," he said, "to find that you are in so much trouble at Studham; I always expected that it would not be an easy post, and so I told you. Nevertheless, I shall not be sorry for your present trials, if you are enabled to come out of them without surrendering one jot of principle, but, at the same time, without needlessly offending prejudice."

"I can assure you, my dear father," said George, "that I have made no changes which I did not think absolutely necessary. Much that I could have wished to alter I have left, rather than give unnecessary offence; and, as it seems, without any effect whatever, for no expressions nor conduct could well be more bitter than those which my opponents have thought proper to adopt. The chief cause of offence is my refusal to patronise the societies which are principally in vogue there; but I also hear that my sermons give cause to much discontent. I have endeavoured to avoid everything, consistently with what I know to be the truth, which might wound or annoy; but, alas! I have almost entirely—I hope not through my own fault—failed in my end."

"Do you find that any have left the Church in consequence?" asked his father.

"No," answered George; "they have not yet, thank God, gone so far. But I hear that steps are about to be taken to get up a proprietary chapel: the rumour, perhaps, is not entirely to be depended on; time must show."

"How fast," cried Charles Abberley, "the new church is advancing, Sir John! The clerk of the works is quite a friend of mine; I can assure you that he is hardly more interested in the progressive steps than I am."

"He is a clever fellow," said Sir John; "and what is better, a thoroughly honest good man."

"If you will allow me," continued Charles, "I will bring over some sketches which I took last year of the windows in Coutances Cathedral; they are of the same style as those of Ayton church, and you might be interested in looking at them."

"To-morrow," said Sir John Morley, "I dine at Mr. Trenton's; so I fear I shall not be able to look at your sketches."

"Thursday, then, if that will suit you."

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Abberley, I shall be very much engaged both in county and private business the whole of this week; so I am afraid I must defer the pleasure till next."

"I shall, at all events, hope for it before very long," said Charles Abberley, as he rose to go, and was followed by Mr. Wallis.

"Catherine, my dear," said Sir John, the next morning, at the conclusion of breakfast, "I wish you would come to me for a few minutes into my study." Miss Morley obeyed; and her father, seating himself by a well-used writing table, covered over with bundles of papers tied with red tape, or secured in steel clasps, and telling her to sit down by him, said:

"Catherine, I cannot be at a loss—and I think that even you must begin to suspect—though, to do you justice, my dear child, I believe you are the last person to have the suspicion—the reason of Mr. Abberley's very frequent visits here. I hope I may be wrong; but I fully believe him to be attached. Now—hear me out—personally I much like that young man; but I wish to tell you, once for all, why he never can stand in any nearer relation to me."

"But, my dear papa, I think you are mistaken. It is very natural that Mr. Abberley, who is fond of society, should prefer a party like ours occasionally, to the quiet of home."

"Well, be that as it may, it will be just as well that we should have a clear understanding on this matter. No child of mine, with my consent, shall ever enter into a family, living, like the Abberleys, on Church property. I have seen the miserable consequences of such a match even in my own times; and if I had not, I could not shut my eyes against the warning given us by all past family history. I am sure that it will be enough for me to have said this to you;

and if you can give Mr. Abberley to understand—as ladies," and he smiled, "*can* give gentlemen to understand—that his attentions to you will be completely thrown away—for his sake I shall be glad, for it may save him from some future unhappiness. I should be very sorry if an end were put to all intercourse between the two families; at the same time, I am not desirous of seeing Mr. Abberley here on every possible occasion for which he can find any excuse for riding over. There, my dear child, that was all I had to say; not for your sake—but for his."

CHAPTER VIII.

Say me, who can, whether extreme
Hath harmed Religion more;
That old of them too liberal,
Or this of our's too poore?
And verily it is a fault,
And maimèd Learning's foe,
That Church possessions should amongst
The lay be shared soe.
If ever England will in ought
Prevent her own mishappe,
Against these *shames* (no terme too grosse),
Let England stop the gappe.

WARNER.

"ARE you riding to Ayton church?" asked Col. Abberley, as he met Sir John Morley a few days subsequently.

"Yes; I want to speak to Westley, the clerk of the works. Will you accompany me?"

"With pleasure." And turning his horse's head in the same direction, he rode on with his friend.

"I have been thinking much, Sir John," he said after a pause, "of what you were saying the other

day about the possession of Abbey lands. In my own circumstances, it could not but make a deep impression upon me, for if there be guilt in the alienation of church lands, I unfortunately, as you well know, share in it deeply."

"I really ought to apologize," said Sir John, "for the freedom with which I spoke to you on the subject. I was sure, however, that you would not give an unkind meaning to what I said, and a deep sense of the importance of the matter on which we were speaking led me on further than I had at first intended."

"Pray," replied Col. Abberley, "do not imagine that I could possibly impute to you any, beside the real, motive. And I will give you the best proof I can of this: for I am going to ask you to continue your remarks on the monastick system. I cannot at present bring myself to take your view of it; but I wish to hear the arguments which appear to you most forcible in favour of it."

"In the first place," replied Sir John, "a system of such very great antiquity, and attested by the universal voice of the Church, must, arguing *à priori*, be good. Excepting in our own and daughter Churches, with perhaps the Indian, I do not think any other is without monasteries. In those Churches which are in communion with Rome, every one knows they are most numerous; but not less so in the various members of the Eastern Church. Russia, for example, abounds with them; so does the patri-

archate of Constantinople; so do those of Alexandria and Jerusalem. Now when we see other branches of the Church supplied with a set of religious houses set apart for the peculiar service of God, we cannot but feel it an undesirable peculiarity that we alone should have none such."

"But," said Col. Abberley, "the vast numbers of men thus immured from the world might surely better have employed their time, and talents, and energies, in some way which might have rendered the most essential service to the Church, than, by a course of life useless to others, have striven after a fancied purity elsewhere unattainable."

"You do not look at religious houses, I think, in the proper light. We may look at them in four distinct points of view; and in each they present advantages unattainable by any other system. In the first place, we may consider them as establishments for the propagation of the truth in parts of the country where from physical or moral circumstances the parochial system is not sufficient. How many tracts of land, for instance, are there, where five or six cottages are scattered here and there on some vast and savage common, nominally belonging to a parish of which the church is three or four miles off! Sometimes, a cottage will be found a mile or two from any other habitation; and the poor inhabitants, in these cases, except that they have probably been baptized, and will probably be buried in their parish church, have no other connexion with it. Much of Cornwall is in

this condition; but perhaps the most remarkable instance was to be seen in the Forest of Dean. Here there were churches; but marriages could not be solemnized in them, on account of their being, in reality, only chapels of ease. The consequence was, that sooner than take the trouble of going ten or twelve miles to a church where they could be married, most of the wretched inhabitants were content to settle down without any marriage at all. Now, in cases like these, of what inestimable benefit would a stationary body of priests, and deacons, and laymen qualified to act as readers, be found! The distant hovels, to visit one of which would occupy the parish priest the best part of the day, when perhaps he has already more labour than any single man can perform, would be known and carefully visited from the monastery. They would, in health, be warned to an attendance on the Church's ordinances, and in sickness, receive Her last consolations: as it is, they receive, too often, neither one nor the other."

"There is much in this," said Col. Abberley, "and one cannot but acknowledge that the void, left by the monasteries, has been in our own times worse supplied."

"Yes; instead of the old system, we see meeting-houses springing up in every direction, and the poor crowding them, because they are near, instead of encountering a weary journey and tempestuous weather, in attending their church. But these diffi-

culties are only physical: the monastick system is still better calculated to meet the moral destitution of large towns. And perhaps it is still more exactly suited to those manufacturing districts where a town springs up in the course of ten years. If, when the first large works in such a place were set on foot, a small cell were placed near it, as an offshoot to some larger house; then, as one house sprung up after another, and one row behind another, the priory church would be open to them. The brotherhood would attend them; and the Chartist, and Socialist, and Atheist would have less chance of spreading their deadly poison among them. The children, instead of the labour to which they are now, from infancy, exposed; labour which injures their minds as much as their bodies; might well be taught their duty to God and man, in the priory school; for the funds of the brethren would allow them to make good to the parents any deficiency which might result from the loss of their manual labour."

"That remedy," observed the Colonel, "is certainly new to me. But such machinery would be expensive."

"If," said Sir John, "we had the funds of our ancient abbeys, we should have enough to evangelize all our manufacturing districts. The funds, as seized by Henry VIII., amounted to just £143,000; the rental of the kingdom being then somewhat about three millions. Now, had we the twentieth part of its present rental; what wonders might the

Church do! Why, the twenty millions which a late writer proposed as a proper grant from the state, actually sinks into insignificancy before what has been done."

"You would also imagine the buildings, as they were, to be existing at the present day. It would be an incalculable accession of influence to the Church. But why put a manifestly impossible supposition?"

"Whatever good they would do now, that, so far as it was needed, they did when they existed. It is far easier for our imagination to bring them forward into our own time, than to carry ourselves back into theirs, when we would judge of their influence. Let us imagine, for example, the monasteries of S. Alban's, Reading, S. Edmund's Bury, Glastonbury, Westminster, and York, each with an annual income of about £150,000 to start up amongst us; why, the effect would be little short of miraculous! And you are to remember, that not only would the Church be enabled to erect and endow temples which should even overtake the increase of population, and to supply ministers to meet their necessities: this is not all. She would at once come forward as the instructor of the nation; boards of education would be no longer needed; training schools would at once be provided. There is not an art in which She is concerned, that She would not be able to teach: and the high and low would equally take their first lessons from Her lips. Then the poor, instead of the

negligent or brutal attendance of some miserably paid parish doctor, would be under the skilful care of the infirmarer and his brethren: the sick-bed would be made softer by their kindness, and the mind of the sufferer be naturally drawn by earthly to heavenly things. None would be left to the tender mercies of the relieving officer: the needy would find food by applying at the abbey gate. The Union system, accursed of GOD, and intolerable to man, would vanish like a dream; in short, the Church would, wherever we turned, present the same aspect, that of the great benefactor to man's soul and body. Hospitality, a virtue now almost forgotten, (for who ever entertains strangers as in the olden time?) would revive: and here again, it would be the Church which practised the virtue it preached."

"You must allow," said Col. Abberley, "that the monasteries did not, in the time of their glory, do all this; and that they do not do it now in those countries where they still remain."

"Granted; but then there were other reasons for this, besides that of the corruption of the system. I do not mean, as I said before, to say that it was not corrupted. But the spiritual benefits of the religious houses were less visible; I do not say less real, for I shall have something to add on that point presently; because the parochial system was then so much more fully worked out. Take some instances: I will not pick them, but take them as they occur to me. Lewes, in Sussex, a town with some 8000 in-

habitants has now six churches; before the Reformation it had fifteen, and two monasteries. Thetford, in Norfolk, had then some six or eight, which have now perished. York, well provided as it seems, had lost about the same number. So it is with Durham; so with Exeter; so with Lincoln; so with Norwich; so, in short, with whatever city you examine. And as to the rural districts. We were considering the state of Cornwall. I speak within limits when I say, that not the third part of the churches which stood there before the Reformation, are standing there now. In its wildest parts, there were chapels, offshoots from the parish church, and probably served at intervals by the parish, or assistant, priest. And this leads to another reason why the monasteries exercised a less visible effect on the spiritual welfare of our poor at the time of their suppression than they would do now. I refer to the infinitely greater number of priests whom the Church then supported. In the first place, there were the chantry priests: and without wishing, or finding it necessary, to defend the corruptions of the system with which they were connected, they must have been, or at least, which is sufficient to my argument, they might have been, very important helps in a large parish. Again, almost every church had at least one, often two, deacons attached to it. We may see traces of them in the sedilia which appear on the south side of our old chancels: there is seldom only one; oftener there are two; oftener still, three.

So that with a body of Clergy amply sufficient to take charge of the population, the services of the monks in that way were little needed, and therefore, comparatively speaking, little exerted. As to your objection on the state of the foreign monasteries at the present day, the same reason will apply to them: add to which, that (except in Italy) the religious houses are no where to be found in their original splendour and wealth. France owes their destruction to the revolution; Germany, to the position she occupies, being the great theatre of all European wars; Spain, to the late revolution; Portugal, to the Marquis de Pombal and the Constitution. However, I will acknowledge that in the country where they remained longest, Spain, they were indeed degenerated."

"But you said," replied the Colonel, "that you had other arguments in favour of the system."

"The second I would mention is this: that they acted in the same beneficial way as colleges now act amongst us; nay, that the influence they exercised was even more beneficial. It is evident that the active and laborious life of a parish priest does not allow him time, had he the means, of laying up much deep learning. He must be content with an influence over his immediate flock; for the Church at large, except in the ways of example and prayer, he can do little. He wants the extensive library which he may consult: and it is at the risk of injuring his parish, if he devotes much time to composition, other than for the use of his parish. I

mean of course composition of works which will be, in other days, standard theology. If you run over the writings of our principal divines, you will see that the greatest of their works were written by those who were not, or at least not at that time, engaged in parish duty. Hooker's Polity, is a glorious exception. Now here, colleges and monasteries supplied just that void which I have noticed. They do not make good parish priests; they do not teach a man how to visit the sick or dying bed; how to comfort a penitent; to awaken a hardened sinner; nay, not even how to control a vestry, or to enforce a rate. And I fear that even the modern professorship of Pastoral Theology will not do much in this way. But when any new and dangerous heresy appears, when any great article of the faith is called in question, when the voice of the earliest and purest age of the Church is to be consulted on any given subject; when our own branch of the Church is to be defended against whatever enemy; then there would be, if we had our monasteries, a race of men ready at once to spring up the champions of the Catholick Faith, trained, not by a few hours' study, but by the investigation of years, to unravel the most subtle heresies, and to penetrate, as deeply as man may do, into the depths of Theology. Monasteries are far more suited to the production of such a race than colleges, for many reasons. Firstly, profane literature and science, which must be studied in the latter, to a certain degree, for their own sakes, would in the

former take their own natural position as the handmaids of theology. Then, the religious atmosphere of the one, the constant prayers, the constant Communions, the immediate dedication to God, contrast vividly with the attendance on college chapel, the mixture of worthier and higher pursuits with aspiration for worldly honours, and dissipation in worldly pleasures, and connexion in secular business. I am not aware that, with the single exception of Barrow's Sermons, any great work on Divinity has proceeded immediately from the walls of a college, from the revolution till within the last few years; let us hope the case will soon be widely different. But should colleges ever again become the strictly religious foundations which they were designed to be, they never could compete with our ancient monasteries as instruments for the propagation of truth, from a physical reason; the smallness of their funds. What religious houses have been enabled to do in this way, you may see in the glorious Benedictine editions of the Fathers' works, which no individual nor set of individuals could have undertaken, and the risk of which no bookseller could have borne; but which taken in hand by a band of religious men, acting under orders from their superiors, and published at the expense of the community, offer a noble example of one way in which monastick houses may contribute to the glory of God. And by whom is such a work likely to be carried on more successfully? Who is the more likely to enter into

the spirit of the Fathers? The man, fresh from the lecture, or the examination, or the hall, or the combination-room, with the papers, good and bad, of twenty classical or mathematical examiners to look over when the appointed progress shall have been made in the work in hand; or he, who with the sweet notes of vespers yet ringing in his ears, looks forward to joining, in a few hours, in the solemn Compline, and perhaps, in a few hours after that, to leave his bed for the first Nocturn? Is there a question, even in a case like this? And how much more must the balance turn in favour of monasteries, when the work in hand is one of dogmatick, still more of practical theology? Who but the inhabitant of such a place could have written the IMITATIO CHRISTI? Who but one living on the same system, could have composed the Sermons and Prayers of Bishop Andrewes?"

"You speak, Sir John," said the Colonel, "in a very different manner of colleges, from that in which you defended them the other day against the attack of Mr. Trenton."

"Do not misunderstand me," replied Sir John. "It is no disparagement to a system to say that it does not fulfil a purpose for which it was not intended. You might as well say that I disparaged a frigate, because I said it would not supply the place of a man of war. From my heart I bless GOD for our colleges: I only say, that they alone can no more supply the place of monasteries, than monasteries alone can supply their place."

"There is certainly," observed Col. Abberley, "a very great similarity between the constitution of a college and monastery. The abbat and the master are personages of much the same nature."

"There is," answered his friend; "though you have hardly traced the analogy correctly. The comparison between a college, cathedral, and abbey, should thus be made out; canons, fellows, monks; sub-prior, vice-master, sub-dean; prior, master, dean; abbat, visitor, bishop. The seat, for instance, of the college master, is the same as that of the cathedral dean; that is, on the south side of the entrance to the choir."

"But now," said Col. Abberley, "let me hear your further observations on the utility of the establishments in question."

"My third argument would be that arising from a consideration of the benefits of intercession. Much of this is, I allow, applicable to the Daily Service as we actually have it: much more was applicable to it when the Hours were said six times, instead of twice, daily. But the beautiful system of nightly prayer, that can only find place in a monastick establishment. The Church then, not content with supplicating the blessing of GOD on Her children at all hours of the day, sends up her petitions for them at a time when they are more peculiarly exposed to danger, and when they are unconscious of the safeguard of Her prayers. And the fourth reason I should dwell on, is the asylum which such places

afford to those who have no other home. The daughters, for example, of clergymen, who, when left orphans must seek their livelihood by going out as governesses, or by some lower way of earning their bread; would they not bless GOD if they could have so holy and so comforting a habitation to which they might fly? There, in different ways, they might effectually serve Him; there, they would daily be consoled by the voice of the Church: there they might weekly, and why not oftener? receive the Holy Communion: instead of being tossed and buffeted about in this world; perhaps, without a home that they can call their own; exposed to all manner of hardships; without friends to cheer or comfort—and all this, not for some high and holy end, but to procure bare subsistence and shelter. So the aged, whose manhood had been taken up in the necessary pursuits of this world; but who had now outlived or settled their families, might they not well be thankful for a place where they might retire, before they died, from the noise and confusion of this world, and prepare themselves for their entrance on the next by deeper penitence, more uninterrupted prayer, and closer communion with GOD? Again; periodical retirement to such a house might be most salutary for one deeply engaged in business: an Advent or Lent so passed would be, as it were, a breathing time for the soul, an untwining the close poisonous embrace of weekly affairs; a strict lesson in setting the affections on things above. This is

often practised in foreign Churches; why should it not be in our own?

"But how is this to be done?" asked the Colonel. "If we are quite unequal now to the re-establishment of the monastick system, what does it advantage us to dwell on its beauties? If we are equal to it; how comes it to pass that it has never been tried? And why do we not find it alluded to with approbation in the works of our standard divines?"

"Its re-establishment," replied Sir John, "is far too long a subject for us to consider when just at our ride's end. But it has been partially tried: I of course refer to the Little Gidding establishment under Nicholas Ferrar. And commended it has been by such writers as Thorndike, Bramhall, and Jeremy Taylor. Nay, do you not know that Burnet (whom I would only quote to the opposers of the system, as an *argumentum ad hominem*) speaks of the re-establishment of nunneries as a work that would ADD HONOUR TO A QUEEN'S REIGN? And does not Bishop Andrewes express in the strongest manner his approval of the system, when he blesses GOD for the holiness of monks, and asceticks, and the beauty of virgins?"

"If, however," returned Col. Abberley, "monasteries were of such benefit as you appear to think, it does seem to me incomprehensible that their dissolution should have been submitted to so tamely, and that so few voices should have been raised in their defence."

"Why," answered Sir John, "there were many reasons for this; but the two principal causes are to be looked for in the corruptions—not of the practice, but of the principles—of the system. No one will now deny, for even Romanists, by their present acts, confess it, that religious houses must be under the controul of the bishop, in whose diocese they are situated. The heart-burnings and jealousies of which the contrary practice had been the source, had alienated the minds of the bishops from those whom, not without cause, they regarded as rivals. The mitred abbat of such a house as S. Alban's in exterior splendour and deportment was quite the equal of a prelate: he gave the blessing in the same way; he wore the same mitre, ring, gloves, and sandals: he carried the same pastoral staff; the only difference being that its crook was turned inwards instead of outwards, to denote that his jurisdiction related only to the internal management of his own house. It was really preposterous that the Easter offerings of the county of Hertford should be made at S. Alban's instead of at Lincoln. And not only does this system of rivalry render the regular clergy objects of jealousy to the bishops; but the means by which this rivalry was supported with success; namely, constant appeals to, and constant dependence on, Rome; rendered them objects of dislike to the people when the corruptions of Rome became too flagrant any longer to be hidden. Of course, it is only human nature that a slight fault

should, in popular estimation, far outweigh the greatest benefit. So the abbeys were, in a certain sense, isolated from the rest of the Church, and accordingly the rest of the Church (partly, perhaps, induced thereto by a promise of eighteen new bishopricks) were quiet spectators of their ruin. Another reason which helped their downfall was, the length to which the system of appropriation had gone among them. The abbey became, so to speak, rector: an ill paid vicar was set over the parish; and he, naturally enough, preferred the life of the religious house to the solitude and poverty of his village home. However, this was not the case everywhere, and some abbeys set a very different example. Witness that of Glastonbury. Many of the most magnificent churches of the west owe their foundation to the liberality and skill of this house: and the parsonages, which, in many instances (though with some mutilations), still remain, shew that the clergy presented to these cures were not non-residents. And the same thing may perhaps be said of S. Edmund's Bury. I know nothing more affecting than the petitions of some of the smaller houses against their dissolution: we have a notable example extant in that of Leyborn[1], in Leicestershire."

[1] It may be seen in Ellis's Collection of Letters, vol. ii. It is addressed by the prioress of this little house to the founder, that is the patron, or lineal descendant of the founder; for the nunnery was removed to Leyborn from Harrington, as early as 1150. Thus it runs: "Right Honourable, our most singular good Master and Founder, our duty in the humblest

"You have spoken much, and from my heart I fear in some respects most truly, of the curse attend-

wise presupposed, with daily prayer of your perpetual and religious beadwomen. Please it your goodness to understand that whereas Almighty GOD hath indued you with the just title of Founder of the Priory of Leyborn, to the great comfort of me and all my sisters, we do and always shall submit ourselves to your most righteous commandment and order, only putting our comfort in your goodness for all causes concerning your poor Priory of Leyborn. And whereas we do hear that a great number of Abbeys shall be punished for misliving, and that all Abbeys and Priories under the value of cc pounds be at our most noble Prince's pleasure to suppress, and put down; yet, if it may please your goodness, we trust in GOD, ye shall hear no complaint against us, neither in our living, nor in our hospitality. In consideration whereof [if] it may please your goodness in our great necessity to be a mean and suiter for your own poor Priory, that it may be preserved and stand, you shall be a more higher Founder to us than he that founded our house. We have none other comfort nor refuge, but only in your goodness, and we wholly submit ourselves to the pleasure of GOD, to the pleasure of our Prince, and to the pleasure of you our Founder, and howsoever it shall please GOD that we shall be ordered, we shall continue your faithful and true beadwomen. As knoweth the LORD, Who ever preserve you to your heart's content.

Your own daily beadwomen,
JANE MESSYNDYNE, Prioress,
and sisters of the Priory of Leyborne.

It appears that Cromwell's agents were sometimes touched with some compunction in the midst of their villany. The four visitors of Catesby Nunnery thus remonstrate:—"Which house of Catesby we found in very perfect order; the prioress a sure, wise, discrete, and very religious woman, with ix

ing private possessions of abbey lands. Now is it not an undeniable fact, that our country, as a country, has never flourished so much as it has done since the dissolution? And taking your own grounds of argument; does not this prove much against your assertion of the sin of that measure?"

"I am by no means prepared to admit," replied Sir John Morley, "that national prosperity is any criterion of GOD's favour to a nation. It is of course easy to collect a large quantity of passages from the Old Testament which seem to prove that it is. But these, (and it is important to remember it,) were specially addressed to a people living under an immediate Theocracy: and in which worldly prosperity was one of the chief blessings attached by GOD's covenant as well to national, as to private, religion. Still, we have traces of an occasionally different method of procedure on the part of the Ruler of all

nunnes under her obedience, as religious and devoute, and with as good obedience as we have in time past seen, or belike shall see. The said house standeth in such a quarter much to the relief of the King's people, and his Grace's subjects are there likewise much relieved. Wherefore," they continue, "if it should please the King to have any remorse, we think that his Grace cannot appoint any more deserving house to remain."

The orators of the Protestant Association, and others of the same "persuasion," might do well to read this, and other testimonies of a similar kind, to be found in class Cleopatra in the Harleian MSS. Even they must allow the cruelty and injustice done to these defenceless women, though they may slight the insult offered to GOD.

things. '*Though the* LORD *give thee the bread of affliction, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more:*' this is evidently designed as a promise and as a blessing. And if the prosperity of nations is to be the measure of their goodness, who were ever more pious than the Lydians, Babylonians, and Romans? What people ever pleased GOD more than the Saracens and their successors? Nay, there was more religion in England under Cromwell than at any time previously; more under Louis XIV. in France, than either previously or subsequently. And how, according to this hypothesis, did it come to pass, that the reception of Christianity by Rome accompanied her fall? No; the hypothesis will not hold; but if it did, your case would be by no means clear. True; England seems at the present time to be greater than ever: both in commercial enterprise, and in successful warfare, in talent, and industry, and wealth, and glory. But is this all real? Is there not within her a deadly disease, which no remedies as yet administered, have affected? Are not the condition of the poor, and the general and rapid spread of atheistical and anarchical principles tokens of a downfall (unless GOD of his mercy interpose), sudden, and fearful? Did not Niebuhr long since give it as his opinion (and who was a deeper political philosopher than he?) that England, like Rome under the emperors, was sinking, slowly, but surely, by a decay, of which the cause could not be explained, and therefore

for which no cure could be found? Your arguments cannot, indeed they cannot, stand: we have 'robbed GOD,' and His Church: and while we hold the gains thus acquired, how can we pretend, as a nation, to make any freewill offering? Talk of our charities! Why, we are not paying the interest of the money seized at the Dissolution. Talk of our prospect for good! 'Riches, unjustly gotten, shall not profit in the day of calamity.'"

CHAPTER IX.

Delicta majorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec templa refeceris,
Ædesque labentes deorum, et
Fœda nigro simulacra fumo. HORACE.

THE above conversation took place on a fine mild day in December; and as the Baronet and his friend alighted from their horses at Ayton church, the works were still carrying on, and with the more activity, as the weather gave every promise of continuing open. The principal attention had, during the summer and autumn, been paid to the chancel, as it was Sir John's wish that service should be performed here during the winter months; for which the Bishop had promised his licence; as the nave and aisles would not be finished till the following midsummer. It was intended to begin the intermediate service on Christmas-day; and Sir John's visit on the present occasion was principally to see that no unnecessary delay prevented the accomplishment of his wish. The scene, as it met the eyes of the visitors, was, both morally

and physically, beautiful. The situation of the church had been well chosen. It was at the distance of not more than two hundred yards from the principal part of the village of Ayton, (Ayton Commander, as it was called, to distinguish it from Lower Ayton), but yet completely by itself. A gentle hill rose behind, at the bottom of which four fine ashes, picturesquely grouped together, shaded the churchyard; at the foot of this hill, meadows stretched away right and left, and on the south side of the building was Ayton Lane. The chancel was almost finished; the nave had not risen more than twelve feet. The churchyard, fenced towards the lane with a flint wall, and bordered by hedges on the other side, was occupied by two long sheds, a saw-pit, and several blocks of Caen stone, carefully raised from the ground on rollers, and matted, in case of frost.

"Well, Whitley," said Sir John to the clerk of the works, "how are we getting on?"

"Vastly well, indeed, Sir John; no fear about the opening on Christmas-day now. We want orders about the way in which the benches are to be placed inside, and where the pulpit is to stand."

"We will step in," Sir John replied. "You have not seen the interior since it was roofed, you were telling me, Colonel?"

"No," said Colonel Abberley. "I wish very much to see what you have been doing."

Following the clerk of the works, they entered through a door constructed in the temporary brick

partition with which the chancel arch was fitted. Col. Abberley seemed lost in astonishment, and could hardly find words to express his admiration. And, indeed, a more practised eye than the Colonel's might have dwelt on the building with delight. There were the eastern window of five lights, and the three side windows of three, all glowing in stained glass that would not have disgraced an earlier age; there was the plain altar-slab, supported on three simple shafts; the ascent to the altar, seeming to defend itself from profane feet by its own majesty, and standing in no need of rails; the floor of the chancel was laid down with encaustick tiles, inscribed with flower work, heraldick devices, badges, and foliated circles; those beyond the altar steps were richer, and represented the Holy Lamb, the Thirsty Hart, the instruments of Crucifixion and the like. Before the steps stood an oaken praying-desk, flanked with two poppy heads, and lined with red velvet, on which the letters IHS were worked in gold thread. The roof was an imitation of those magnificent specimens of woodwork which have made Suffolk famous; for Mr. Wykeham, although intending that the fabrick of the church should be simply and purely Decorated, had, after some hesitation, decided on a Perpendicular roof; giving it at the same time a higher pitch than was usual in the decline of Christian architecture. Hence Sir John and his friend walked into the nave; the sharply turned bases of the piers and jamb shafts of

the windows already gave promise of a glorious building.

"What stone is this?" inquired Colonel Abberley, pointing to the walls.

"Caen stone, sir, the shafts and jambs, and so forth; the other comes from Winsford Hill, up here."

"I did not know that there was a quarry there," remarked Colonel Abberley.

"Nor was there," replied Sir John: "but I had reason to think that the stone of that hill would be a very good building stone, and so it turned out. One of the most pleasing things about this building is, that the farmers round have, quite of their own accord, given me, some one, some two, some three days' carting; and, in some cases, mere labourers have requested to be allowed to do half or a quarter day's work. One honest tenant of mine, who had a fine healthy young yew on his ground, asked to be allowed to plant it in the churchyard."

"Well," said the Colonel, "you are quite effecting a return to the spirit of the old church-building times. What," he continued, "is the use of those red crosses on the various blocks of stone which are lying about in the churchyard?"

"Why, sir," answered Whitley, "that's done that they may lie *unanimous* with the way they lay in the quarry. It doesn't make much matter with good stone, but it's as well done as not; and so I always give

orders to Victor Luard, at Caen, that he should send us every block marked."

"You seem forced to take a good deal of care of them," remarked the Colonel, pointing to the rollers under the unworked stone, and to the straw with which the bases of the piers and doorjambs were wrapped.

"Bless you, sir, yes! It's as tender as a baby, the frost splinters it to nothing, if it gets damp at all. This way, sir; this is one of our workshops. And he led the way into one of the long sheds we before mentioned. Here were some noble planks of well seasoned oak, of thickness such as might well challenge comparison with that used in old churches; there were poppy heads, and seat-ends, and misereres, fresh from the chisel, and in all the beauty of their first sharpness.

"Fine thick planks," said the Colonel. "Are they your growing, Sir John?"

"Why, sir," said Whitley, "you don't think that this wood was cut down a' purpose for this church? It's been cut these five years, if it's been cut a day. Try this, sir," and he balanced one of the seat-ends on its base. The Colonel made an ineffectual attempt to raise it with one hand, and complimented the clerk on its solidity.

"Ay, sir," said Whitley, patting and stroking the poppy head as if it had been a child, "it's not often you'll see a piece of timber like that, I'll warrant you. That piece, sir, took a man one month

to carve, and beautifully well he has done it, surely," he added, with another approving pat.

"What's all this?" demanded Colonel Abberley, pointing to a work table, on which lay several strips of paper, figured over with a variety of crotchets, and presenting an unintelligible mass of design to an uninstructed eye.

"These are the working drawings for the font cover, sir. It is to stand sixteen feet from the font—that's two and twenty from the ground, including the steps; and then it's to work up and down from one of the hammer beams, with a carved pulley and twisted silk rope; the counterpoise will be a dove—so as the cover goes up, the dove comes down."

"And do you find that your workmen take an interest in their work?"

"A deep interest," said Sir John; "they watch it with an allowable kind of complacency. And one or two of them show considerable promise as carvers. This, now, strikes me as very well done;" and he took up a pelican in her piety, intended to form the finish to the font cover.

"Admirable!" exclaimed the Colonel.

"Now, sir," said their cicerone, "this way, if *you* please. This is our masons' shop."

Here were gurgoyles of the most grotesque appearance, and formidable dimensions; bases with deeply shaded mouldings; capitals with rich foliage, and the various pieces of carved work, which now seeming useless and unmeaning, were to form the

rich tracery of the windows. But that which principally riveted the Colonel's attention, was the magnificent but yet unfinished font, which lying horizontally, and supported through the water drain in its centre on a kind of iron pivot, which revolved on two wooden "horses," could be made to turn round, so as to bring any part required to the chisel. It seemed almost alive with the soft gay foliage which twined around its sacred emblems. There were also the pinnacle crosses; all rich—each differing from the other.

"Was there not," asked the visitor, "after expressing his admiration of the skill and taste displayed, "an inscription on the foundation stone, Sir John? I have never yet read it."

They walked to the south-eastern angle of the chancel, and Sir John pointed out the legend. It ran thus:—

> ✠ In nomine Dei, Amen. ✠ Ad Gloriam Sanctissimae et Individuae Trinitatis et in honorem Beatae Mariae semper Virginis positus est primus lapis hujus ecclesiae, pecunia multis ab hinc annis profanos in usus diversa, jam vero SS. Ecclesiae restituta, exstructae. A.S. MDCCC . . . . .

"I am so little of a scholar now," said the Colonel, "whatever I might have been, that I really cannot interpret the inscription, particularly when clothed in such typography.

"Thus it reads," said the Founder. "In the

Name of God, Amen. To the Glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity, and in honour of Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, the first stone of this church, built with money long misappropriated to profane uses, now restored to the Holy Church, was laid in the year 18—."

Colonel Abberley, after another look round at the operations, bade farewell to Sir John Morley, and rode home. On his table he found an application for the use of his abbey for a dinner party from Mr. Trenton; and if anything could have led him to feel more deeply his own unhappy position as the owner of church property, it was his liability to receive requests like these, involving the most painful desecration of what was still hallowed ground. "Well," he thought, "if I cannot now repair the error I made in purchasing the property, at least I can and will at once and for ever put a stop to practices, which to men possessed of the least feeling, putting religion out of the question, must be very painful." And he accordingly dispatched an answer to Mr. Trenton, setting forth at some length, and with the greatest pains to avoid offence, the reasons why he could not comply with his request.

"Here's a pretty thing!" said Mr. Trenton to his friend Mr. Tomkins, who occasionally favoured him with a call, when he did so a few days afterwards; "a very pretty thing indeed! I knew how it would be when old Morley took up his crotchet about the duty of giving up church property. I knew it would

not stop there! Here's what one might expect from a follower of his—such as that Colonel Abberley will become in less than no time!"

"What is the matter, sir?" asked the preacher.

"Matter!" cried Mr. Trenton. "Matter enough, I think. Why, sir, the whole nation's turning Popish. Here, I did but send a simple note to Colonel Abberley, asking him to let me bring a few friends to dinner in the abbey next Friday, (the thing has never been refused) and here I have an answer telling me in the civillest possible way that I shan't! I shan't, sir! Think of that! And why, pray? Why, forsooth, because the ground is hallowed, and all that stuff? Hallowed, indeed, by a parcel of lazy old monks, that it is perfect blessing to be rid of! Why, sir, I shall begin to doubt if we're in a Protestant land or not. It's enough to drive one mad, to hear such nonsense talked with all the gravity possible, and by a man like that, too! One might expect to see it in a parson, especially if he were a Puseyite; but Abberley is neither the one nor the other."

"Awful times, sir! awful times! The strides which Popery is making in the Establishment are perfectly surprising. To say nothing of what's going on in the world, only glance at what is taking place immediately around us! There's Studham: Mr. Morley has prayers twice a day, preaches in his surplice, continually brings forward that most awful doctrine, Baptismal Regeneration, plainly tells his people that they can't be justified without good

works, pretends that he has the power of absolution, and I know not what else. Then his father is building a church at Ayton; the most frightfully Popish thing you can conceive. I declare to you, sir, I was perfectly shocked when I went into it the other day. Then, as if the Church was not rich enough before, here's an addition made to the Vicar's income of £400 a year, and the vicarage turned into a rectory. In short, turn wherever you will, the cloven foot of the beast has left a print."

(This last metaphor, which appeared to produce an impression on Mr. Trenton, had been used by Mr. Tomkins the Sunday before, at the New Connexion.)

"It does indeed, Mr. Tomkins, it does indeed. Sir, I honour you for the feeling you display on this subject. I have always called myself a Churchman, as you perhaps know, but I can assure you that I never was bigoted; in fact, when I was in business I was as often at chapel as at church. (This was strictly true: Mr. Trenton had confined his attendance on publick worship to about twice a year.) But to tell you the truth, I have some thoughts of joining your congregation. I was disgusted by the intolerant way Sir John behaved about the teetotal meeting: come to *me* another time, sir, and you shall have another kind of answer."

"Sir, I am exceedingly obliged—sir, you do me great honour," replied Mr. Tomkins. "I need not say that it would be a proud day for me which added to my congregation a gentleman of such talents and

so much religious feeling as yourself. But this emboldens me to proffer a little request. In the hope of doing something to stop this torrent of superstition, I have for some time thought of delivering a course of lectures at the Wesleyan chapel on the subjects which are now the principal topicks of controversy. My excellent friend, Mrs. Laxington, has led me to expect the greatest success; and I must say that I am not without the hope of doing good. If I could obtain a name, sir, so deservedly influential as yours, I feel certain that it would be of the greatest advantage to my design. I have taken the liberty of bringing a programme with me; perhaps you will look at it."

Mr. Trenton read as follows:—

"The Rev. J. Tomkins proposes to deliver a series of six lectures on the Tractarian Controversy, at the New Connexion Chapel, Monk Teynton; to commence at twelve o'clock on Friday, January 16th, and to be continued every Friday, at the same hour. Tickets to be procured on application (in person or post-paid) of Mr. Tomkins, Teynton; or of Messrs. Paull and Son, Studham. Terms:—for one lecture, 2*s.* 6*d.*; for the whole course, 10*s.* Children half price. The chapel will be warmed.

"ANALYSIS.

"LECTURE 1.

"Introduction—easiness of the subject—difficulties with which it has been surrounded—the Bible

and the Bible alone the Religion of Protestants—duty of Private Judgement—example of the Beræans—lamentable spread of Popery—encouraged by the supineness of the Heads of the Establishment.

"Lecture 2.

"General idea of the Church—false notions entertained on the subject—Bishop Pearson's view—refuted from Scripture—Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity—its feebleness and diffuseness—specimens of its reasoning—Wesley's later opinions—vindicated and supported.

"Lecture 3.

"Baptismal Regeneration—glaring absurdity of the doctrine—disproved from Scripture and common sense—Doctrine of the Merit of Good Works—confuted by the Epistle to the Romans—scope of that Epistle—weak reasonings of Bishop Bull—Justification by Faith alone the end and aim of Scripture.

"Lecture 4.

"Other heresies of the new school—Transubstantiation—Prayers for the Dead—Belief that the Church of Rome is not the Antichrist of Scripture—Popish building and adorning of Churches.

"Lecture 5.

"Spread of the Tractarian Doctrines—Oxford—Cambridge—London—Ireland—America—principal

works published in defence of them—Triumphant confutation of all by several champions of the Protestant Faith.

"LECTURE 6.

"Wesleyan Methodism—its rise and spread—witness borne to it—sudden conversions and happy deaths of many of its disciples—neither dissent nor schism—its present struggles—its future prospects—recapitulation—conclusion."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Trenton, "they seem to me to be calculated to do a great deal of good, and I shall be very glad to take six tickets. If I can, I will certainly be there; but I must take care of the gout, you know; and so you must not be surprised if you don't see me. Send me the tickets, however, and I'll pay for them."

With a profusion of acknowledgements, the future lecturer took his leave; and the tickets were forwarded within a few minutes after his reaching home.

In the mean time, a very different scene was going on in the study of Teynton Park. That morning Charles Abberley had requested his father to take a turn in the grounds, and in the course of their walk he acquainted him with his attachment to Catherine Morley, and requested his sanction to his informing Sir John of it, and obtaining his leave to plead his own cause to his daughter.

"My dear Charles," said his father, "I have feared

these two months past that you were laying up a bitter disappointment for yourself. My leave you have willingly—and my best wishes for your success; what I have seen of Miss Morley's disposition I like; Sir John I esteem more than most men: the family are in every way unexceptionable. But, take my word for it, you will not succeed."

"Why not?" asked his son hastily. "Not because there is any person—any one—who—"

"Any rival in the question? not that I know of. No: but I know enough of Sir John to be certain that he will never give his consent to his daughter's marriage into a family holding the kind of property which we do. I had intended to tell you what I thought of the matter before; but I never was so fully persuaded of Sir John's determination on matters of this kind, as I was in a ride I had with him to his church the other day. Now, I will be quite open with you. I had not considered the subject when I bought this property. If I had, I certainly would never have purchased it. As it is, I must make the best of it: here I am, and here I shall stay. Think before you act, that is all I say. If you fail, you will make it almost necessary for yourself to leave the neighbourhood for some time. That you will not like. Yet, if you are determined to try, the sooner the better; you will have the less bitter disappointment, and you will sooner get over it."

"I had thought of this difficulty before;" said Charles. "I am sorry you think it one, too. How-

ever, it will not mend by waiting; so I will e'en try my fortune this very morning."

"Remember," said his father, "you have my best wishes—but I warn you against being too sanguine."

"Do you not know?" asked Charles:

> "He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who dares not put it to the touch,
> To win or lose it all?"

And in half an hour he was galloping to Teynton Park.

Some two hours subsequently, as Colonel Abberley was writing in his library, his son rode slowly up the park, finding his way back rather, it seemed, by the sagacity of his horse, than by any exercise of volition on his own part. The Colonel waited with some anxiety for the well known quick step in the hall.

"It is as you thought," said Charles, slowly entering. "Explain it to my mother, will you? You shall see me as usual at dinner." And before his father could make any inquiries, or offer any consolation, he had retreated.

A few days afterwards, it was known in Teynton, that Mr. Abberley was going to spend some weeks with a friend in the south of England.

CHAPTER X.

I am sure they that commenced the war against the king and the Church first fell out with our Liturgy, and refused to join us in our prayers: I have therefore a strong persuasion, that if we were joined in our prayers, we should quickly be united in affection.—Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

We have already seen, that George Morley, though he had at first enjoyed considerable popularity at Studham, soon experienced a great change in the feelings and behaviour of his parishioners. Those of them who, before Mr. Fortescue's time, had taken the most active part in the management of the societies, schools, and bible classes then in vogue, and who, even in the incumbency of that gentleman had maintained all their own dignity and pre-eminence, although he took no part in their proceedings, found their position considerably lowered, and their influence much diminished, when Mr. Morley declared himself diametrically opposed to their principles and to the practice of the institutions which they upheld. After trying in vain to force them upon

him; after, both by anonymous letters, and by other means, acquainting him with their sentiments on his sermons and views, and finding that he still kept on in the old course, as little depressed by their dislike as he had been elated by their approbation; more especially, when they saw that his vigorous measures were beginning to effect a very decided change, for they would not call it improvement, in the parochial schools; they determined on trying what other means might do. The scheme of establishing a proprietary chapel seemed the best: and accordingly one or two gentlemen were appointed to inquire into the probable expense and practicability of such a plan, and engaged to report progress at the expiration of a month.

A very large number of the "friends and admirers of evangelical truth," for so they termed themselves, met in one of the principal rooms of the Bull and Gridiron, at the time appointed. There were chairs and benches in the centre of the room for those who intended to be auditors, while those who had any idea of addressing the meeting, took their station at the upper end, where several chairs were placed round a table furnished with pens, paper, and a large black inkstand.

Mr. Turnbull, a retired grocer, was unanimously called to the chair. Not having been in the habit of addressing assemblies of this, or indeed of any other kind, he appeared in some confusion, and totally ignorant how to commence business. Having

made one abortive attempt with the words, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, the meeting being composed wholly of the latter, he at length expressed his belief that his excellent friend, Mr. Larkins, had a communication to make which would be highly gratifying to those before him.

Mr. Larkins, an auctioneer of considerable repute, and therefore not at all intimidated by the presence of his auditory, said:

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—in obedience to the wishes expressed by the last meeting, in company with the gentlemen then named as my colleagues, I proceeded to make enquiries on the subject of the proprietary chapel which we propose to erect. As, however, there are many in the room who were not amongst us on the previous occasion, I shall take the liberty of stating the reasons which, in the opinion of many of the most respectable inhabitants of Studham and its vicinity, render such a step desirable, if not imperative. The experience of the past winter has shown, that while our present rector occupies that position, we must not expect to hear within the walls of our church that Gospel to which we have, for so long a time, been accustomed. Of that gentleman, personally speaking, I have not a complaint to make. We are, I presume, all sensible of his attainments; and can only wish that they were directed to a better end, than that of propagating Puseyism. As this, however, is an event rather to be wished for than expected, it becomes us to take

the matter into our own hands: and since we cannot hear the truth at the old church, why, we will hear it at the new one (applause). I do not think that we need at present anticipate any difficulties in the procuring of the Bishop's licence: and if these should occur, it will then be our duty to consider whether we do not prefer to be guilty of an uncanonical irregularity, than to sin against the first principles of Christianity, by supporting a clergyman who disseminates error. I will therefore give you the estimate of the expenses of the proposed building, and the manner in which we think of providing for them. There is an unoccupied piece of ground between Freeschool-lane and Adelaide-street measuring forty-three feet by thirty-eight. This, with galleries, would, in Mr. Stubbing's calculation, give ample room for six hundred. The expense, including the internal fittings, would amount, including the ground, to about £1500, more or less. We propose to make twenty shares of £75 each. We may fairly count on every seat being let, if we only provide ourselves with a truly evangelical preacher. Taking them one with another, they will produce thirty shillings a year: or £900 on the whole. We should recommend that the salary of the preacher be £500: the expenses of repair, lighting, &c. may probably amount to the sum of £50 annually. This will leave to the trustees an annual revenue of £350; which will bring £17. 10*s.* to each. I need not point out the advantageous character of this investment: the annual

return will be somewhat over twenty-three per cent. We further propose to insure the security of this interest by a clause in our stipulation with our minister, to the effect, that in case the revenues arising from the chapel should fall below £900, the deficiency should be borne by him and not by us. I believe I have now laid the outline of our scheme before the meeting. I may perhaps add, that some addition to the income of the chapel will in all probability be made, by the occupation of its vaults as wine vaults."

Mr. Sharpe, an attorney, rose to propose the formation of a committee for the purpose of carrying the design recommended by Mr. Larkins into effect. As to the duty of the step, whatever unpleasant consequences it might entail personally on those who took it, nothing could to him be clearer. They must never forget those memorable words, the trumpet-sound of which seemed ever to ring in his ears; words, spoken by an evangelical clergyman of the Church of England, to a large and respectable congregation, and referring to ministers of a similar stamp with their own, "Desert the churches, refuse to recognise the ministry of these Anglo-Catholicks! Speak strong expressions—they would do so: they would set no store by their own expenses or labours, so that the truth they loved might be transmitted by them to their children, whole and untainted as they received it."

Mr. Smith would not destroy the effect of his

eloquent friend's speech by any addition of his own. He contented himself with seconding the motion.

Several gentlemen were expressing their willingness to become shareholders, when our old friend, Mr. Wingfield, who had been an attentive listener, begged leave to say a few words.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I'm a plain spoken man, and don't want you to take my advice for more than it's worth. I should like to ask Mr. Larkins what he means by Puseyism; but I never yet found any one who knew its meaning—so I suppose he don't: therefore I won't trouble him for an answer. What I mean to say is this: Stubbing can build as cheap as any man: I don't deny it; more by token, four of his chapels have fallen down before they were well finished. But if you think to get the place you are talking of for £1500; why, I wish you *may* get it. And if, when you've built it, you get six hundred people to fill it, why there are more geese in Studham than I thought. That's all. Good morning, gentlemen."

Mr. Larkins threw himself on the meeting. Was he to be, he might say, insulted, by a gentleman who evidently was totally unacquainted with business, solely because he had laid himself out to meet, as far as he could, the wishes of his friends and neighbours?

This brought a vote of thanks to the energetick auctioneer, and a committee having been nominated, of which he was to act as perpetual chairman, and the

able conduct of Mr. Turnbull in the chair having been duly acknowledged, the meeting separated.

Thenceforth, operations were carried on with great energy and success. As church-room was really wanted in Studham, Mr. Morley did not consider himself justified in throwing any obstacles in the way of the licence. He contented himself with pointing out the mercenary spirit which actuated the proposers of this notable scheme, and warning his hearers against the results to which it would lead: the criticizing and captious spirit in which the discourses of the minister would be heard, and the unchristian power lodged nominally in the trustees, but eventually in the congregation. In the following summer, High-street chapel was ready to be opened. An advertisement in several of the principal papers for an active evangelical clergyman, brought a considerable number of applications: and from these the trustees chose three, whose testimonials they considered superior to the rest, and whom they determined to hear for themselves, before making their final decision. The gentlemen in question were accordingly informed that they were to preach in the morning, afternoon, and evening, respectively, of the following Sunday: for though in future, the chapel was to be open only morning and evening, on the present occasion it was to have three services performed in it. Mr. Larkins, on whom the task of announcing this determination had devolved, received violent remonstrances from the preacher who had

the evening allotted for his exhibition. He, however, pacified him by observing, "that really the morning service was so long, that one was never so well disposed to hear a sermon after it: that the afternoon was not a favourable time either; because, coming after dinner, the discourse often sent people to sleep; and that these two drawbacks gave the evening lecturer as fair a chance of success as his brethren."

The eventful morning came. The chapel was crowded. The trustees took their seats in the pews nearest the pulpit, in order that they might not lose a word of the discourse on which they were to form their judgement. Their inattention during the prayers was singularly contrasted by the fixed and solemn abstraction in which they listened to the preacher, a worthy clergyman of the older evangelical school, when good works were not discarded from the creed of its partizans, and a future reckoning was sometimes brought before them, ay, and that according to their works. As he delivered his text—that verse in which St. Paul announced his determination of knowing nothing among his converts, but Him Who is the sum and end of all preaching, not one of the trustees but felt that the luxury of their present position would have been cheaply purchased by the money they had already expended in procuring it; and which, by the way, amounted to considerably more than they had been led to expect. The style of the preacher was plain, and his discourse was

good, so far as any discourse can be so in which no mention is made of the Church, as the Body in which, and of the Holy Sacraments as the means by which, we must look for the manifestation and influence of the grace of God. Nothing appeared to strike the tastes of the judges; and in fact their attention had flagged very considerably, when it was recalled by the sentence, "I would therefore impress upon you, my brethren, a deep sense of the importance of every, even the most trivial, action. Once done, it cannot be undone, even by repentance: and once written down against you, it must be answered for at the Great Day of final account, when you must all be judged according to your works." One or two significant glances were exchanged among the criticks: and it was observed that their attention relaxed into a state of profound listlessness, as if they were not unwilling to indemnify themselves for the painful tension of thought it had latterly been necessary to exercise. The afternoon discourse appeared more to their taste: yet it was generally whispered about among the congregation that the expectation of the trustees had been a little disappointed. But the evening preacher, who was an Irishman, and who trusted entirely to his extemporary powers, bore away, both in the opinion of trustees and congregation, the bell; and was, by general consent, named without a moment's hesitation the successful candidate.

Such were the auspices under which the new pro-

prietary chapel opened: and for some time its success fully answered the most ardent wishes of its supporters. The attendance at the parish church was much thinned: for the seats at the new place of worship were not filled by those who were unprovided with any room at church, but by those who had hitherto formed a part of George Morley's flock. He, however, went on in his old course; persisting, "through evil report and good report," in that system which he felt to be alone consistent with his position as a Priest of the One Church of God.

Charles Abberley, when he left his father's house, betook himself to the quiet rectory of a college friend, who had but lately taken possession of it. Mr. Sanders, the clergyman in question, had that easy character, which disposed him to take that view of any subject brought before him which would give him the least trouble: and therefore, on being made, as he speedily was, the confidant of his friend's distress, offered the best consolations in his power: these being, that the very singular objection which had influenced Sir John Morley's refusal, showed him plainly to be a person of such a warped turn of mind, that the alliance, so far as it respected him, was to be entirely deprecated. Charles Abberley's mind was by no means made up on the subject: for though, as might be inferred from a former communication of his to Sir John on the matter, he had much reverence for the decaying structures of our abbeys, and felt that they were, in some sense, holy ground,

he was not prepared to go so far as to assert that the tenure of them by laymen was utterly and totally indefensible. The argument, which seemed to him of the greatest weight on the opposite side, was the following: If lands, once dedicated to God, are to be scrupulously returned by the possessors, and reappropriated to their original use, where are we to stop in our desire to do justice? Is enquiry to be made with respect to every acre, whether it was rightly and justly acquired in the first instance? If an unfair bargain was concluded by a remote ancestor, are we to seek out the descendant of him who was the loser by it, and reimburse to him the sum which we believe to have been improperly made our own? If not, what line of distinction can we draw between the two cases? If we are, there is apparently a *reductio ad absurdum* of the original argument; for no property could then be held, at least with any security. At the same time, our enquirer saw that this difficulty did not at all impair the force of those positive arguments which he had fully heard from Sir John, and which his own good sense and right feeling had partly suggested to himself. He was also fully aware of the great importance of the question, and determined on giving it an attentive consideration: the rather, as knowing that, in the ordinary course of things, Ayton Priory would some day become his own, and that a decided judgement must, at all events then, be formed upon the subject. He therefore procured such books as he conceived most

likely to bear on the question; he studied from Blackstone the generally received notions of the tenure of landed property; and in Spelman, he read with the utmost attention the opinions which that writer entertained on the subject of sacrilege generally, and particularly of that connexion with abbey lands, in which he himself was likely to be involved. At length, his mind gradually seemed to open to a clearer view; and he was enabled to draw a line between the genuine inferences deducible from that definition of sacrilege, which Sir Henry Spelman adopts, and those consequences which had previously appeared to him necessary, but which he now saw to be founded on a misapprehension of the whole argument. He saw that, with respect to all transactions between man and man, where the acquisition of an estate was in question, human justice might be appealed to, if there were any suspicions of unfair dealing, or any certainty of forcible occupation: that even with respect to those estates which in a change of dynasty, or in the course of a revolution, were transferred from one family to another, it was evident that property, belonging to man, must be involved in the changes and fluctuations to which its possessor was liable. But the case, he thought, was different, when applied to possessions immediately set apart for the glory of Him Who knoweth not change; His title can never become extinct: that, inasmuch as human laws do not reach, and indeed, were never intended to have reference to, wrongs im-

mediately done to the ALMIGHTY, except so far as they are also offences against man, He had been pleased to take, as long experience testified, the punishment into His own hands. Where the injured party—if any such there were—was one of our fellow creatures, we might safely leave it to him to complain: in the other case, we are the parties, and we are alone concerned, to examine into the defect of our title, and to make good our unjustly acquired property. There was besides, he found reason to believe, considerable difference between the possession of property by a race of individuals, with no further connexion between themselves, than that which arose from family, and that held by a corporate body, intended by its Founder to be everlasting, and therefore, in a certain sense, the same throughout all succeeding ages. Human laws, he observed, made a distinction between the property of families and that of corporations in general: how much more should it prevail where that mystical incorporation, the Church, is concerned?

Having made up his mind as to the truth of the axiom, "Once the Church's, always the Church's," his next determination was that Ayton Priory, if it ever fell into his hands, should be given up to the Church: in what manner, he did not think it necessary to decide, as the advice of those whom he could depend on would, of course, much influence him. He then, after due consideration, dispatched a letter to his father, containing his own views on the

question, and the steps by which he had been led to them. He entreated Colonel Abberley not to imagine that any hope of prevailing in his suit had influenced him; he was prepared, he said, to give the best proof he could of this by promising not again to press it, if his father would only be prevailed on to part with the abbey estate. This was the furthest point which he now thought it prudent to aim at; his father, he knew, would ridicule the idea of surrendering it freely: the money received for its purchase, if ever it should come into his own possession, he would consider sacred; and, in the meantime, the immediate curse attending the possession of those lands would be taken off the family.

The Colonel was somewhat discomposed by the receipt of this letter; he knew his son well enough to be aware that he was indeed influenced by conscientious, not by interested, motives; and a certain voice, in the recesses of his heart, told him that the advice was good. Finding it a difficult task to reply fully to it, he contented himself with the following answer.

"Ayton Priory, Feb. 8.

"Dear Charles,

"I have received your letter, which I dare say is very well meant. Like other well-meant things, however, it is not particularly conclusive. To answer it briefly, and once for all, I will say thus much. I like the estate here; I have in some measure improved it, and I intend further improvements; I

have not the slightest intention of parting with it. When you come into possession of it, it will, of course, be of no importance to me what becomes of it; and I have no sort of desire that after my death it should continue in the family. I must now request that this subject be hereafter dropped between us.

"We are expecting you back, as soon as you can make up your mind to be happy in your old quarters. I hear that Miss Morley is about to be married: I cannot say what truth there is in the report.

"Your affectionate father,
"CHARLES ABBERLEY."

This letter was never, as the reader will see, to reach the person to whom it was addressed.

CHAPTER XI.

. . . Not to-day, O Lord !
Oh, not to-day ! think not upon the fault
My father made in compassing the crown.
Five hundred poor I have in daily pay,
Who twice a day their withered hands hold up
Towards heav'n, to pardon blood.
. . . More will I do;
Tho' all that I can do be nothing worth ;
Since that my penitence comes after all,
Imploring pardon. King Henry V.

A few days after the dispatch of the above epistle, Colonel Abberley had ridden over to Teynton Park for the purpose of calling on his friend; the intercourse between them, somewhat interrupted by Charles Abberley's unfortunate attachment, standing now on nearly its original footing.

Sir John Morley, of course, knew nothing of the request which Charles had made to his father, or of its refusal; the effects, however, of having got rid of a troublesome business by a decisive answer, were very visible in Colonel Abberley, who was more than usually cheerful and communicative.

"I wish," he said, "that you would give me your advice, Sir John, with respect to a plan that has been proposed to me for giving better effect to the ruins, by planting on the north side. I do not profess to be much of a landscape gardener myself, but the change, it strikes me, would be very pleasing."

The subject was canvassed for some little time, with much more interest, however, on the part of the visitor than on that of the host; the latter feeling the greatest repugnance towards discussing a design whereby an abbey was viewed only in the light of a picturesque ruin.

"I am sorry to hear, Sir John," said his friend, "that your son finds so much opposition at Studham. I fancy he must almost regret that he accepted that living."

"He was tolerably well prepared, I think, for the enmity which an unflinching, uncompromising course of conduct in a minister will always at first call out."

A letter was here brought in to Colonel Abberley; the servant informing him that his own groom was waiting for his answer.

"What is the matter, Colonel Abberley?" asked Sir John Morley, as he saw his friend's countenance change.

Colonel Abberley put the letter into Sir John's hands without speaking, and, leaning on the mantlepiece, covered his face with his hands. It was hastily and almost illegibly written by Mr. Sanders, and

contained the information that Charles Abberley had fallen in the course of riding, that a concussion of the brain had taken place—that his life was despaired of —and that if his father wished to find him alive, he must lose no time in setting off on that sad journey. The letter had been directed "to be opened," and Mrs. Abberley, knowing where her husband was, had forwarded it instantly.

"O, Sir John," said the poor father, "this is all, all owing to myself! If my boy dies, I shall have killed him. You don't know all—some day I will tell you—now don't keep me—I may see him once again, at all events—he may forgive me: pray, pray don't keep me," he added, as Sir John, at first ineffectually, urged that the Colonel had better wait where he was till a chaise could be procured from Studham, as it must necessarily pass through Teynton on its way to the village where Charles Abberley was. In a few moments Colonel Abberley allowed the reasonableness of this plan; a servant was dispatched on horseback to Studham; Sir John's carriage was sent to bring Mrs. Abberley, and Robert Morley went with it: Sir John's attention being fully required by his friend, who, indeed, seemed in a state bordering on distraction. By degrees he learnt the application which Charles Abberley had made to his father—the refusal of the latter to part with that which his conscience reproached him for retaining—the struggle which he had experienced before he could make up his mind to continue in possession—

the joy he had felt when the voice of warning was silenced—and now, the consequence.

What comfort it was in the power of Sir John to bestow, he willingly and tenderly gave; and the miserable proprietor of the abbey lands listened with something like a returning gleam of hope.

"Hear me, Sir John Morley," he said at length; "if it shall please GOD to restore my son to me, freely and joyfully will I give up those lands, or their purchase money, to His service: and I take you to witness of this, that you may turn against me, if in the day of prosperity I forget the vow of my adversity."

"I trust and pray," said his friend, "that the bitterness of this stroke may pass from you; I think that the step you have now taken is the most likely one to bring down God's blessing on you; at least, you have done your duty. But now, you must not neglect means. You will pass through Rushton. You know how celebrated a physician Dr. Seymour is. Had you not better take him on with you? Very probably the medical advice at Overton is not first-rate."

"Thank you, Sir John, thank you. Your kindness and presence of mind I am sure I shall never forget. I will not fail to do so."

"And I hope you will let me have the earliest intelligence you can. If my presence on the spot would be of any service or comfort to you, do not fail to let me know. I will most gladly come."

Late that evening, Colonel Abberley, his lady, and Dr. Seymour, were rapidly passing over a bleak common which was the boundary between Overton and the next village. The Colonel's spirits were sunk to the lowest ebb of depression; the evening, wild and rainy, seemed to suit well with the errand on which he came; so far as the uncertain flash of the lamp showed the features of the moor, there were old deserted pits, sullen pools, heaps of stones piled in fantastical shapes, and the most thorough desolation which the imagination could fancy.

"Thank God!" said the physician at length, "we are nearly in. I can see the lights of the village. Now, my dear sir, let me beg you for your son's sake to command yourself a little; your excellent lady here sets you an admirable pattern. I hope and trust things will be better than you expect: accidents of this kind have often occurred in the course of my practice, looking ugly enough at first, but attended with no worse consequence than a scar. Besides, let the worst come to the worst, while there's life there's hope."

"Ah, if there only *be* life!" said Mrs. Abberley, as the carriage suddenly stopped at the parsonage gate.

"Stop! my man," said Dr. Seymour. "Don't ring the bell. We'll do nothing that can disturb the patient. Make yourself quite easy, my dear madam; I see lights—so the windows cannot be shut."

"How is my son?" cried Colonel Abberley, leap-

ing out of the carriage, as Mr. Sanders came to the gate.

"He is living;" replied the Rector.

"Sensible?"

"No. He has not been since the accident."

"What advice have you had?" asked the physician.

"Mr. Smythe of Roxwich is here, sir: we have called in no other advice, because he said he had done all that could be done."

"Is he in the house?"

"In Mr. Abberley's room."

"Tell him, will you be so kind? that Dr. Seymour is here, and would be glad to see him. Don't go up yet, Colonel Abberley; I should like to see the patient first."

"Walk into the parlour, sir," said Mr. Sanders; who, though not a clever, was a kind-hearted man. "I'll settle with the boy. If you will come into my study, Dr. Seymour, Mr. Smythe shall step down there."

The Colonel and his wife passed a quarter of an hour in miserable suspense. One or two books and trifles which were Charles's, and still were lying where he had left them, called him up to their minds as having occupied, in all his health and strength, that same room but a few hours before. A large folio on a side table attracted Colonel Abberley's attention; he opened it, from the vague impulse of doing something; it was Spelman's HISTORY OF

Sacrilege. Mr. Sanders entered at the same moment.

"I have left the physicians together," he said: "they will not be long. Ah! that book was a great favourite of your son's, Colonel Abberley; he spent many hours in studying it last Christmas. But, my dear sir, you are faint! Let me get you a glass of wine. I beg your pardon, Mrs. Abberley, for being so inhospitable. I will send my old servant to you; and then you must really exert yourself to take something."

Colonel Abberley had waited by himself a few minutes longer, when Dr. Seymour and Mr. Smythe entered.

"Well, my dear sir," said the former, after introducing him to the other, "I will be candid with you. It is a very bad case; but, with God's blessing, I think we shall get over it. I have rubbed through worse before now: so I dare say you have, Mr. Smythe."

"Certainly, sir: but I feel it a great comfort to have your experience in so delicate a matter."

"Two heads are better than one, certainly; but you will be glad to hear that Mr. Smythe has done, Colonel Abberley, exactly what I should have done myself had I been on the spot from the very first. We are both, however, agreed that we cannot allow you or your lady to visit Mr. Abberley to-night. The fever runs very high, and there is a considerable aberration of mind; anything which might increase

the latter must be carefully avoided. We shall try to-night to bring down the fever, if we can; and I trust to-morrow, you may be able to see him."

"But if," said the Colonel, "any sudden turn of the disease should prevent my ever seeing him—"

"You need be under no apprehension of any immediate result. There may be no change at all till the seventh day; and these cases often run on to the fourteenth or one and twentieth. Indeed, I will tell you plainly, that we can do very little in this kind of attack. We can only help nature—she must fight the battle for herself: we watch the efforts she makes to relieve herself, and assist them as we can. Your son has everything on his side; youth, and health, and strength, and temperate habits: and I trust in God he'll do very well yet."

That was such a night as Colonel Abberley had never before passed. The rain and wind was not more violent without, than the agitation of his mind within. He heard all the particulars of the accident from his son's friend; and found a little relief in relating to Mrs. Abberley that which pressed most heavily on his mind, his son's application and his own refusal.

For ten days did the sufferer seem to hang between life and death: on the tenth, in the afternoon, he fell into an uneasy sleep, which, as Dr. Seymour assured his parents, would form the crisis of the disease. Colonel Abberley sat by the bedside, and watched every motion and respiration; you might

almost have heard a pin fall through the house, so great was its quiet: Dr. Seymour occupied himself by waiting in the study, and the Rector was engaged in the parish. So hour after hour rolled on; and still Charles Abberley slept. The Colonel felt as if he had never before known the meaning of prayer; and ever and anon, as he looked at his son, he imagined that his breathing was more easy, and his countenance calmer.

Late at night Dr. Seymour was summoned to the sick room, with the intelligence that Mr. Abberley was awake, and sensible; and when he left it, it was to assure his father, that unless a relapse should occur, he thought the danger entirely over.

CHAPTER XII.

But many of the Priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundations of this house were laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy.
EZRA iii. 12.

"Now that we have Charles again amongst us," said Col. Abberley to Sir John Morley, "gaining strength every day, it is high time that I should be thinking of the best way of carrying my design about Ayton Priory into execution."

"You are aware, of course," replied his friend, "that only a part of the estate which now goes under the name of Ayton Priory is in reality abbey land. Additions have been made to it, I believe, at several different times; and it will in the first place be necessary to discover exactly what these are."

"I think I have done so," answered Col. Abberley. "The abbey estate is not so large as I imagined; and, truly, I am sorry for it; for after the mercy I have just received, I feel that all I

have would be a poor acknowledgment of my sense of it."

"Now, may I ask, in what way do you intend to use this property?"

"I will answer by another question. What do you think of the re-establishment of monasteries?"

"If you ask me," said Sir John, "as one layman and friend may ask another, for a private opinion, by which I wish nobody to be influenced, I will very willingly tell you. I not only think that it would be one of the greatest blessings which could be conferred on the English Church, but that it is one of those things which will, sooner or later, be done in some way or other. At the same time, no one is more conscious than myself of the immense difficulties attending the design."

"Many have occurred to me," answered Col. Abberley. "But what strike you as the most formidable?"

"The whole question of vows; their nature, extent, and stringency; the degree to which religious houses should be subject to parochial superintendence; the nature of the Daily Services; the discipline. These are four considerations, involving difficulties innumerable."

"The question of vows seems to me one of the hardest. For my own part, I cannot even imagine a satisfactory conclusion to it."

"It is fortunate for us that we are not called upon to do so. In the first place, it seems to me that

vows for life are out of the question, at least in the present state of the Church. At the same time, I can hardly imagine a monastick establishment without vows. For it might so happen, that such an one would be all at once broken up: there being nothing to bind any member of it to such a life for a moment longer than it might suit his fancy. Again, a man might enter himself as an inmate of the house, and after taking up his abode in it, might find after a trial of two or three days, that the system 'did not suit him,' and consequently might take his departure: now this would evidently throw ridicule over the whole thing."

"We do not, however, in point of fact find," said Col. Abberley, "that the fellows of colleges, who make the nearest approximation to monks, are in such a hurry to free themselves from college discipline; they generally remain in that situation—where the time is shortest—for two or three years."

"And very naturally," replied Sir John. "In the first place, they are making money; in the second, many of them are waiting for college livings; in the third, wherein are they at all touched by discipline? They live just as they please; they go when and where they please; they are resident or non-resident as they please; in short they have the most complete freedom that any man could possibly covet. But, if the case were different; were there even that discipline which it was the intention of the founders of such institutions to establish, I think

you would find, that even in spite of the income and other advantages, college-fellowships would be held for a very short time. Now in monastick institutions, without any inducements, I mean of a worldly nature, to remain, and with occurrences, daily and hourly, to infringe on personal tastes and wishes, I fear, unless novices were bound to stay for a certain period, the same week would often see the beginning and the end of their adoption of a religious life."

"But would there not," asked the Colonel, "be a certain disgrace, even in the eye of the world, attached to such a course of proceeding? Would it not incur the same ridicule, that laying the hand to the plough and looking back always does?"

"Not sufficiently, I think, to deter men from a change of mind. You are to take into consideration, too, when the inducements to do this would be strongest. At the very time that the disagreeable part of the change would be most strongly felt, its advantages would be least understood, for there would not have been time to perceive and to appreciate them. Besides, is it not a fact, that the monastick system has never been without its vows? Who are we, that we should turn eclecticks in a matter, which the experience of the Church has tried for so great a number of years? Are we wiser than the early Fathers, who never dreamt of the system, as of a thing which could be taken up and laid down at any moment? No; a monastery with-

out vows would be little better than a religious hotel; where apartments might be taken by the day, or the week, as occasion might serve. Let us, at all events, be serious and in earnest: do not let us play at the conventual system; let us show that we feel the entering on a life of peculiar devotion and self-discipline to be a matter that requires some further deliberation and determination, and preparation of heart, than the merest change of abode, or alteration in our methods of housekeeping."

"But are there not many who would willingly, were they not shackled, take up a religious life, who, if they knew that they must continue in it a certain number of months or years, would find the very same life an intolerable burden? Ought we not to modify our system for such?"

"Would not the doing so be yielding, and that in a matter of religion, to one of the very worst impulses of human nature; the impatience of constraint, which you may see in most actions of men, from the cradle to the grave? Does the Church act so? You might as well argue—people do argue so—far better to leave a child to himself as to what course of life he will pursue: if he becomes a virtuous man, let it be from his own free conviction that it is better to be virtuous; not from motives of compulsion or terror, which render that which might be an action of generosity, one of slavish fear, and so deprive it of merit. But the Church makes the child, at the very first, bind itself by a promise of serving GOD: and

as if that were not enough, She binds that child again, by another vow, when he is come to years of discretion."

"I was perhaps using rather a popular argument, than one to which I should myself attach much importance," said Col. Abberley: "at the same time, you must allow that the very notion of a vow would frighten many from having any thing to do with the system."

"So be it," said Sir John Morley: "such faint-hearted servers of GOD we may well be content to lose. Take this view of the case: a man enters an establishment of the kind we are mentioning: he is sensible that it is an excellent discipline for him: he is equally sensible that there is much in it which, as people say, goes against the grain. He balances and hesitates whether he shall continue to stay or not, and the unsettled state of mind in which he is, prevents him from deriving any real advantage. Did he know that he must stay a certain time, whether he preferred it or not, he would set himself to reap all the advantages from the moral culture, and brace himself up to bear the discipline. An example of a similar kind we may often see. A young man is sent to college: he is under the authority of others, and knows that whether he likes the kind of life or not, he must for a certain space of time bear it. At first, probably, he makes a virtue of necessity: in time, he thoroughly enjoys that which was primarily forced upon him. But one in later life, and who is his own

master, knows he may please himself about taking his degree: the consequence is, he loses infinite time in thinking whether he will do so or not; and the chances are, he never does."

"Still," said Col. Abberley, "you would limit the time of the vow."

"I would decidedly," said his friend, "in the present state of things, whatever I might do in a different age and under different circumstances. I should fix two limits; say three months, and five years: under, and beyond which, a vow might not be taken. Of course, when one was expired, it would be very possible to take a second. Thus, when the allotted time came to a close, the party who had taken the vow would be able to look back on the advantage he had derived, and the improvement he had gained from his former course, and according as he thought that it would be more for his advantage, and the glory of God, that he should continue the contemplative, or return to the active, life; so he would be free to act."

"But this plan would, it seems to me, deprive monasteries of one great advantage, which you were mentioning when we last spoke on the subject, and which then made a great impression on me; I mean, the being asylums for those, who in consequence of domestick or other affliction; or in order to observe more profitably such a season as Lent, or Advent; wished to retire awhile from the world, and to pass a certain season in stricter and more uninterrupted devotion."

"I would by no means hinder such a proceeding: such persons might be admitted for a short time at the discretion of the superior, who also would allow them a necessary latitude in comparison with the brethren."

"In what particulars, then, do you think it would be practicable to revive discipline, and how would your monastery be supported and carried on?"

"In imagining such an establishment, it is necessary to clothe one's ideas in some palpable form, in order that they may have reality and body. It would be better, at first, probably, that such houses should be small. We will imagine one intended for a prior, or superior, or whatever you may choose to term him, and twelve brethren. The parts of the building which would be indispensable, would be, a chapel, a library, a hall, or refectory, a general parlour, an infirmary, a lodge for the prior, a porter's lodge, and two cells for each of the brethren. To which I should like to add, one or two rooms for the reception of strangers (for I would not have hospitality neglected), and cloisters."

The cost of such a building would not be much. The endowment should be something of this kind. Every one who entered the monastery, be he poor or rich, should live solely and entirely at the expense of the house: for private property, though it could not be relinquished, must be for the time that a monastick life is taken up, laid aside. The rich man would be expected to devote some part of his wealth, either to

the library, or the buildings, or the provision for the poor; or perhaps he might found one or two more brethren's places. The management of his money must be undertaken for him by some friend, and he must, personally, derive no advantage from it. The poor brothers, on the contrary, would receive the benefits of the institution without any remuneration. Supposing the building complete, and the library tolerably furnished, the endowment would consist; firstly, of a sum sufficient for the maintenance of the brethren, and of the servants. Every meal, except in case of sickness, or of leave from the master, would be taken in the refectory. The servants—of course men—would be few: as four, including the gardener and the porter, would be amply sufficient; and they would attend the services, and to a certain degree share in the discipline, of the brethren. The fare would at all times be simple; on fasts and vigils it would be restricted as the superior should direct. A certain number of poor, as the funds would allow, would receive food at the porter's gate daily. These items would form one principal account in the income. The superior would have a salary, say of £300, or £400 a year; because it would be highly desirable that he should be able, in case the interests of his own house, or of the Church required it, to take a journey for the purpose of obtaining information, consulting libraries, giving and receiving advice, &c. Still, this expense, though desirable, would not be necessary. The brethren would each receive a small

stipend for the purpose of clothing themselves; that being their only expense. It would be desirable that the dress of all should be the same: probably, that of our clergy, with the constant addition of the cap and gown. This, I think, with a slight annual charge for reparation would constitute the expense."

"How should you propose that the services should be managed?"

"The superior, and one of the brethren, should of necessity be priests; I would also have a deacon. At first, the Daily Service of the Church would probably be all that the Bishop would authorize. He might, however, according to the Rubrick, allow the Litany to be said daily. Thus four services would be provided. Supposing that Matins were said daily at six A.M.; the Litany at nine; the Holy Communion administered at twelve; and Vespers said at six: what an angelical life would such an one be, compared with those which are now led; though, I confess, falling short of those advantages which a more extensive ritual would supply. And probably, in time, a form of Compline might be authorized; that is the service we most need; or perhaps the use of certain psalms at certain hours might be established by competent authority. I would have the whole service choral; at the first establishment of the monastery every one of the brethren should be trained to chaunt; and that would suffice once for all: inasmuch as new comers would be instructed by the already existing body of choristers. There would,

also, be an organ. The chapel would be very small; but, so far as it went, it should be perfect. The nave would be for strangers and for the servants; six misereres would be seen on each side of the choir; there would be lectern, and prayer-desk, and the like, of course; and in an establishment of this kind, the re-introduction of copes would come almost naturally. The brethren might meet in the hall, and so, with the superior, enter the chapel at once, instead of dropping in as it might happen. It should always stand open for private prayer: and the superior, by setting the example himself, would soon remove that unwillingness to pray in publick, which, from the wrong acting of a right motive, would at first be felt. I would have it lighted at night till the brethren had retired; that all might be able to have access to it in committing themselves to God for the night."

"You have spoken several times," said Colonel Abberley, "of the discipline of your establishment. In what, do you imagine, would it consist?"

"In the first place," answered Sir John Morley, "in a strict observance, not only of the fasts, but also, for those in good health—a matter to be judged of by the superior—of the vigils of our Church. Then, I think that silence, either at such a given time every day, or on some particular day, would be found very serviceable. Again, the complete separation from the world would be in itself continual discipline. For there could be no mixing in society at all without leave of the superior; all newspapers, maga-

zines, and other periodicals, should be strictly prohibited. He, indeed, would be supplied with them; because it would be important to him to be well acquainted with the movements taking place in the Church. I am inclined also to think, that all letters should pass through his hands. He, too, would regulate the time of rising and retiring to rest, the hour and measure of daily exercise, and other minutiæ of the same kind: without his leave no one must presume to pass the gate. All these little things, in which one's own will must be given up, would form a very excellent exercise of self-denial."

"And what would the principal employments be?"

"The library ought," replied Sir John, "to contain the best editions of the works of all the Fathers, and of our own principal divines. Besides these, there would be the best ecclesiastical histories; the leading volumes in the principal controversies, even of those which are now less commonly read. For example, I would have a collection of the best pamphlets put forth in that stormy period, the beginning of the seventeenth century, on the nature and rights of convocation, the power of the lower house, and so forth. How invaluable would a knowledge of them be, should we live to see convocations once more assembled! Then, those who were equal to the work, might be employed by the superior in editing scarce works of our own divines, or in translating and bringing out editions of separate treatises of the

Fathers. What would be their connexion with the poor depends, in great measure, on the view we take of the subordination of these houses to the parish priest. Now, I am well aware that the general feeling among those who have paid any attention to the subject, would make the monastery a part of the parish; would place the superior completely in the power of the Clergyman. I may be wrong—but my own opinion is opposed to this. In the first place, the reverse of wrong is not right. The old system, by which abbeys were exempted from episcopal jurisdiction, was totally indefensible: but, because we allow that, do not let us err too much on the other side. I would have the superior in all cases nominated by the Bishop, who should be *ex-officio* visitor of the house, and therefore competent to remove its head in case of ill conduct or lax discipline. But to make the parish priest another visitor, what is it but to introduce a new order of men into the Church? Here would be an instance of priests exercising visitatorial power over priests, in a manner quite unprecedented. It is true, we have Archdeacons, who, being priests, have a kind of authority over their equals. But the case is different: in the first place, they do it as the 'bishop's eyes'; in the next place, they are appointed by him, and, of course, chosen on account of their superior zeal, learning, activity, or prudence. But, and it is important to observe it, these visiting priests *would not be appointed by the*

Bishop. They would become so *ex-officio*, in consequence of the religious house being locally situate in their cures. I need not point out to you what extraordinary consequences might be the result. It might happen that a young man, without any experience even in parochial duty, far less endowed with any knowledge of the end, aim, and bearing of the institution which would, in a certain sense, be under his charge, might be called on to act as visitor towards a house, the superior and perhaps some of the inmates of which were aged priests, learned, and tried, and experienced. How painful a situation for the visitor! Still, I allow, that so far as the brethren have any connexion with the poor of the parish, they must be under the controul of the parish priest exclusively. But if he and the superior both feel that they are engaged in 'driving,' as Bp. Montague wrote to Abp. Laud, 'towards the same end, though not by the same means,' they will easily adjust the manner in which the services of the brethren may be employed. If the parish be large or over-peopled, the priest will find himself provided with more than one additional curate; and the bodily wants of the poor would be relieved daily at the monastery, preference being given, of course, to those who were recommended by the parish priest. If the funds would allow it, an infirmary should be attached to the institution, where the poor should be taken in and attended; at least, this should be the case in large towns and manufacturing districts. There might

also be a school, which the brethren would, by turns, instruct."

"You said just now," said Colonel Abberley, "that, for the time of a man's living in the abbey, he was to derive no advantage from his private property. You do not, I suppose, mean that he may not, during that period, give away what he pleases in charity."

"Undoubtedly he may; only it should go through the hands of the superior, and not come immediately from himself."

"But there are many local calls," returned the other, "on his benevolence, of which the superior, as being at a distance, could know nothing, and on the merits of which he would not be competent to decide; what is to be done in this case?"

"Why," replied Sir John, "those who have most local calls, large landed proprietors, would not be the fittest inmates for such a house, because they could be serving God better by a life of active benevolence among their tenantry and dependents. Still, where a man feels himself bound to bestow his charity on any particular village, or neighbourhood, he would leave directions that a certain sum should be given to the priest or priests of the place in question, to be expended annually on those whom he or they might consider the most deserving objects of charity. All accustomed annual subscriptions would also be continued. Any other money to be expended in charity would then be placed in the

superior's hands, either to be laid out on the general good of the Church, or put at the disposal of the parish priest."

"I am the more disposed to agree with you with respect to the freedom of the house from the controul of the latter," said Colonel Abberley, "because there is, I think, an analogy, in support of your view, which you have not mentioned. Grammar schools, though the master takes, or should take, a licence from the Bishop to teach, are in no wise under the management of the parish clergyman. No one looks on this as an infringement of the parochial system."

"Very true," said Sir John. "But you are aware that there are writers who have gone so far as to call the whole monastick system essentially anti-episcopal: who class together, with as much folly as falsehood, 'Puritan and monastick schism,' and who tell us with the utmost gravity, that the great end of Romanism was to break down the distinctions between the clergy and laity[1]. However, it is equally true that the same writer, with as much gravity, tells us in another place, that chancels were designed to foster the extravagant notions held by Romanism as to the superior sanctity of the clergy above the laity. We need not give ourselves much trouble with one who thus spares us the pains of contradicting his statements by doing it for himself. Indeed, I only mentioned the thing to show the rooted antipathy which

[1] British Magazine, Nov. 1842.

men, professing veneration for antiquity, how truly I am not concerned to say, have towards the institutions which we are now discussing."

"Such opposition, however," said Col. Abberley gravely, "ought not to have much weight against the arguments which may be brought on the other side."

"No, indeed," answered Sir John. "And now, to end what I have to say in answer to your first question, by mentioning two great advantages which would immediately arise from the re-institution of religious houses. Consider the immense sums now necessarily spent by every man of a certain property in supporting a decent external appearance! For every year that such an one was the inmate of a monastery, the whole of this might be devoted to charity. I am quite aware that a political economist would contradict me *in toto*, as to the advantage or expediency of such a step; and tell me that it would be better to employ the butcher, the baker, and the fishmonger, the groom and the butler, the cook and the housemaid, than to expend the same sums on those, who by profuse charity might be encouraged in idleness. But I am *not* a political economist (in the Edinburgh Review sense of the word), and I cannot forget that we are commanded to do good, hoping for nothing again. The other advantage is one which it is impossible to dispute. There are many young men, designed for Holy Orders, and wishing to prepare themselves for their work before

they enter on it, who, at the close of their college career, find themselves without the hope of a fellowship, but anxious, if possible, to acquire some, at least, elementary knowledge of Divinity, anxious to be put on a right course of reading, and to be able to have access to the best editions of standard divines. All this they might, to be sure, get at Cambridge or Oxford; but they have not the money to enable them to stay there, unless they take pupils; and if they take pupils, then they have not the time to pursue their Divinity studies. If they go home, their time is broken in upon, or, at least, they have not access to any well-stored library. They end, therefore, by pupillizing, perhaps, for a year or two; they fall into habits of life by no means fitting them for their future profession, and they at length enter into Holy Orders, when they are fully as little prepared for them intellectually as, and perhaps less so morally than, when they first took their degrees. Would not a monastery come in well in such a case as this, supplying habits of self-discipline, an able instructor in a course of reading, access to the ordinances of the Church in their perfection, quiet, undisturbed leisure, and (it might be) some insight into the working of a parish?"

Colonel Abberley was silent for some time, and then said: "If then, Sir John, I wished to carry so promising a design into execution, by re-appropriating Ayton Priory to its original use, how would you advise me to set about the task?"

"In the first place," replied Sir John, "I would have you well and wisely count the cost of such a proceeding; I do not mean literally, but metaphorically. You hardly can calculate on the amount of disgust, and hatred, and enmity, which you will raise. If you feel that you have courage for this, if you have weighed the good of the deed against the suffering which it will occasion, if your heart is set on rendering this service to our Mother the Church, why then, in GOD's name, write to the Bishop. Lay all your wishes before him: tell him what you will be able to settle on the institution, and request him to take the whole thing on his own hands. I think he will not say nay. If he does, your duty as a Churchman is clear; to give up all further idea of the step, and to lay out the money arising from the sale of the abbey lands, (either keeping them in your own possession, or parting with them, as you please,) to some other charitable use. If he consents to the plan, you, of course, must leave its details entirely to him. In that case, the only thing in which you can with propriety interfere, will be the restoration of the fabrick. It's working you would not wish to have anything to do with."

"I will take your advice," said the Colonel, "and that without loss of time. But, if he refuses his consent, and I devote the money to some other end, the look of the abbey standing in my own grounds will be what I shall hardly like."

"You will then, however, have no possible share

in the original sacrilege, and may be a better guardian to the fabrick than any one else would be. But, if the Bishop consents, I hope we shall not lose you from the neighbourhood?"

"I have not the least intention of quitting it," replied Colonel Abberley, "if I can meet with a house. But I must really be riding home. One word more, Sir John. Charles, of course, told me what passed between you and himself some months ago. He is now wild to see you again on the same subject. If your answer would be the same, I had rather he were spared the pain of an interview."

"Tell him," said Sir John, with a smile, "that I shall be delighted to see him any time to-morrow morning."

CHAPTER XIII.

And now to speake, as in finalle,
Touching thende that I undertooke
In English for to make a booke,—
That stant twixt earnest and game;
I have it made, as thilke same,
Which asketh for to be excused,
And that my boke be not refused
For thilke schole of eloquence:
Belongeth not to my science
Upon the forme of rhetorike
My wordes for to peint and pike.

GOWER. *Confessio Amantis.*

"If you can get *her* consent, Mr. Abberley," said Sir John Morley, after a long *tête-à-tête* in the study of the latter, "I will not refuse mine. As I said, the only objection that I had against you has been completely removed by the noble conduct of your father: and you are quite free to plead your own cause."

Of this permission Charles Abberley was not slow in availing himself; and in the course of an hour, after some tears, and more smiles, the matter was looked on as definitively arranged. Colonel Abber-

ley's company to dinner was requested and given: and while Robert Morley and his mother were, or appeared to be, so deeply engaged in interesting discourse as to have no time for anything else, and Charles and Catherine were too much taken up with each other to wish for more general conversation, Sir John and his friend had ample time for discussing not only the event of that day, but the design which Colonel Abberley had mentioned on the preceding evening. On the whole, it was concluded that Sir John Morley, as being intimately acquainted with the Bishop, should lay before him the proposed scheme with respect to the monastery. He intended, in the same letter, to request him to fix some day about Midsummer for the consecration of the church, as its nave would then be completed, although the tower would still be a work of time; and both the fathers agreed that the day of the dedication would also be well suited for that of the proposed marriage, which the Bishop should be requested to perform himself. The answer to this application was eagerly expected by both parties; and on receiving it, Sir John Morley lost no time in communicating it to his friend. With respect to the consecration, the Bishop fixed it for the Feast of S. John Baptist; at the marriage he would also be most happy to officiate. As to the other scheme, he requested time to think, and to consult upon, a matter of so much importance, but promised to give a decided answer when he should visit Monk Teynton.

"You have every reason to be satisfied," was Sir John's comment: "the Bishop, had he intended to give a decided negative, would not have taken time to consider; and you could hardly expect him to consent at once to such a scheme, without taking time to consider its difficulties, or acquaint himself with its advantages."

The spring months wore away: and, as whatever news Monk Teynton afforded was sure to come into the possession of Mrs. Laxington, we will trust to her for a full and fair exposition of them.

"My dear Lady Morley," she said in the course of a morning call, "what beautiful spring weather, to be sure! I never saw Teynton looking better. I only hope it may last. Well! and I suppose you are beginning to get ready for your grand doings next month; I am sure you must have enough to do, if it were only in ordering the breakfast and dinner on *the* day. Why, I suppose there'll be half the county with you. Really, it is very generous in Sir John to keep open house then, as one may call it. I suppose you know that Mr. Trenton and Mr. Jupp don't approve of consecrating churches at all—they say it's Popish—but do you know, Lady Morley, I begin to think there isn't quite so much in what they say about that matter as I once did. Everything that they don't approve is Popish now-a-days; for my own part, I think Mr. Trenton's more like a pope than any man in the village. You know he is quite the support of Mr. Jupp's chapel, and has

everything there quite his own way, for Mr. Jupp does not dare move his little finger without leave. Well! and Sally Jupp, a good natured girl she is, was telling me the other day that her father preached a sermon on the rich man and Lazarus; next day, Mr. Trenton sent down to say that if he ever heard such a sermon at Cave Adullam again, he would never set foot in it. I think really this is too bad—don't you? Why, there is not much liberty for Dissenters, after all, if this is to be the way of going on. For my own part, I mean to stick to the good old fashions—I'm getting rather tired of new-fangled ways."

"I hope, Mrs. Laxington," said Lady Morley, guessing what was the object of her neighbour's call, "that we shall have the pleasure of seeing you both at breakfast and dinner on that day."

"Really now, Lady Morley, you're too good! I'm sure I shall be most happy. I thought very likely you might ask me to the breakfast; for I said, I don't think that Lady Morley will forget an old friend, I said, who has always wished her and her family well. But more than that I really did not look for. However, I shall be most glad to come; and if I can be of any use in helping you beforehand, you know I've nothing to do but to assist my friends. And talking of wishing you well, I'm glad to hear that that nasty chapel that plagued Mr. Morley so is going to be given up."

"Indeed!" said Lady Morley: "I had not heard

that; indeed we see George so seldom, on account of the Confirmation which is coming on, that I know nothing whatever of Studham news just now."

"Why thus it is," answered the other: "I must know all about it, for I had it from Miss Tibbs, and she's a particular friend of Mrs. O'Donagough. Mr. O'Donagough, you know, preached at the chapel to the people's great liking. I don't know how many presents he did not have forced on him, as it were, and the seats were crammed as full as they would hold, and there were police at the doors every Sunday evening because the pickpockets swarmed there. Last of all, he ended by marrying the daughter of old Alexander, the banker, and a pretty fortune she brings him: her father was mad about it, but it was no use; she would and did have her own way. Well, as soon as she had got matters settled, she told Mr. O'Donagough that he must give up his chapel, and settle in London, else she would have nothing to do with him. He was glad enough to do it; because, they say, there had been some little falling off in the pew rents, since his affair with Miss Alexander had been talked of: how that was I can't say, but so it was, he gave up, and I believe is becoming a very popular preacher in town. Of course they had to choose somebody else: and there were two candidates that the trustees could not decide between; there were half on one side, and half on the other. Then they threw the matter open to all the pew holders; and there was such canvassing, and begging,

and scraping as you never saw. At last one was elected by a very small majority: then all those who had been against him, gave up their seats, and the thing would not pay. So they offered it to Mr. Morley at a very reasonable rate; but he would have nothing to do with it; and the dissenters gave a good round sum for it: so they let them have it."

George Morley, a few days after, confirmed the above account; the High-street chapel had been offered to him for £1500. But, in the first place (though he had already raised a larger sum than this for the building of a new church, which, as we said before, was much wanted), the unecclesiastical character of the building would have been a sufficient objection; besides which, the situation was far too near the old church to render it desirable. It was at Ferncombe, one of the outlying hamlets, that he proposed to erect the new church.

Every thing connected with that of Ayton went on in the most flourishing manner. Carving, and touching, and retouching, were finished at the proper time. The only misfortune which occurred in the undertaking being, that in moving the font into the church, the dray was upset, and the carved work so materially injured, that Sir John Morley determined on providing another.

"Does Charles dine here to-day?" he enquired of his daughter, some few days before that fixed for the wedding.

"I think he said that he should," answered Catherine.

"I only asked, because his father and mother are coming. Col. Abberley and I have business this evening, which will probably occupy us till late; so let tea and coffee be sent to us in my study."

This was accordingly done: and the friends (the legal business connected with the marriage having been previously settled) found themselves at leisure to talk of the scheme which they intended to submit to the bishop, respecting the endowment of the abbey. Sir John himself had been a liberal benefactor, inasmuch as he had incurred less expense at Ayton church than he had anticipated, from the presents of stained glass, church-plate, and the like, which had flowed in upon him.

In the middle of their discussion, a gentleman was announced as desirous of speaking to Sir John Morley, and Mr. Wingfield made his appearance.

"Very sorry to intrude, sir," he said, "but my name's Wingfield: I live at Studham. I wanted to have a few words with you, sir."

"I will leave you then," said Col. Abberley, rising, "for a few moments."

"No objection to your hearing, sir, all I've got to say. Coming through Ayton just now, Sir John, I heard that your grand font was smashed. They tell me you have let several gentlemen give some one thing, some another, to your church: if you'll allow me, I've a fancy to give the new font."

"I am sure your offer is very liberal," said Sir John, "and I will be the last to deprive any one of the honour of contributing to God's house. But perhaps you are not aware of the expense?"

"All's one to me," said Mr. Wingfield: "ten pounds or a hundred, I don't care. Thank you, Sir John, thank you: let me know when it's to be paid for, and my name's not Tom Wingfield, if I don't pay for it. Good night, sir."

"Won't you take a cup of tea, Mr. Wingfield, before you go."

"Never drink tea," replied the other: "hear it's bad for the nerves. Good night, Sir John, and thank you!"

"Who is this singular old gentleman?" asked Col. Abberley.

Sir John related his history, and reminded his friend of the proceedings in which he bore so conspicuous a part in the Musical Festival. "It is very gratifying to me," said Sir John, "to see the number of offerings to God from different hands which adorn Ayton church. God bless all who have contributed them!"

And now, what have we more to tell? Others may fancy, better than we can describe, the cloudlessness of that festival of S. John Baptist: the fulfilment of the adage predicting blessedness to the bride that the sun shines on: the congratulations, and smiles, and tears; the procession to Ayton church, the general holiday of the country round, the

filling of its deep chancel by surpliced priests—the press of worshippers in the nave—the crowds without —the choral service—the anthem, "the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain THEE, how much less this house!"—the numbers that pressed to the Holy Communion—the astonishing sums bestowed at the offertory. Nor shall we relate, how, a small cannon being planted on the top of Ayton Hill, as soon as the benediction was given, and the consecration complete, a signal was made by firing it, to the churches of both Teynton and Studham, both of which possessed heavy rings of bells: and from both, at the appointed notice, such a peal of treble bob majors rung out, as was chronicled on the walls of the belfry of each church, for ever. We may mention, however, that so much sensation was created by the ceremony, as to induce the Wesleyans, shortly after, to perform the Consecration Service in their new meeting at Studham: the local preacher arraying himself with a surplice, and acting the part of the bishop[1].

From the door of Ayton church, Mr. and Mrs. Abberley took their departure: the rest moved in a kind of procession back to Teynton Park. And here we might, were we so disposed, relate at length how the poor were feasted in the open air; how "O the Roast Beef of Old England," summoned them to

[1] This is a fact. It took place at Dorking, some three years ago, after the consecration of Holmwood chapel, near that town.

dinner; how God save the Queen was sung in chorus after; how the health of the bride and bridegroom was given both within doors and without; how thanks were returned, and speeches made. But the close of the day was almost as full of interest as the beginning.

In the course of the evening, the Bishop, Col. Abberley, and Sir John Morley, retired into the study of the latter.

"Now, sir," said the bishop, "I am prepared to go into the subject of the re-establishment of monasteries, and to give you my opinion with respect to your design for the restoration of Ayton Priory."

* * * * *

THE END.

Gilbert & Rivington, Printers, St. John's Square, London.

DATE DUE

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S

54831
Neale, J. M. D.D.
244.5
N25
Agnes de Tracy.
loan
Summer
APR 25 '31
Berkley Seminary
NOV 31 '33

54831

244.5
N258a

C0-BUX-872